Dance

MAGAZINE

JULY 1950

35 CENTS

Chicago National Association of Dancing Masters

THIRTY SEVENTH ANNUAL NORMAL SCHOOL AND CONVENTION

August 7th thru August 26th, 1950

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Certificate of attendance issued to all students taking the Normal School Work. Our annual prospectus giving complete information about Normal School and Convention now ready for mailing and can be had by writing to the Executive Office Of The Association, 20 East Jackson Boulevard, Chicago 4, Illinois.

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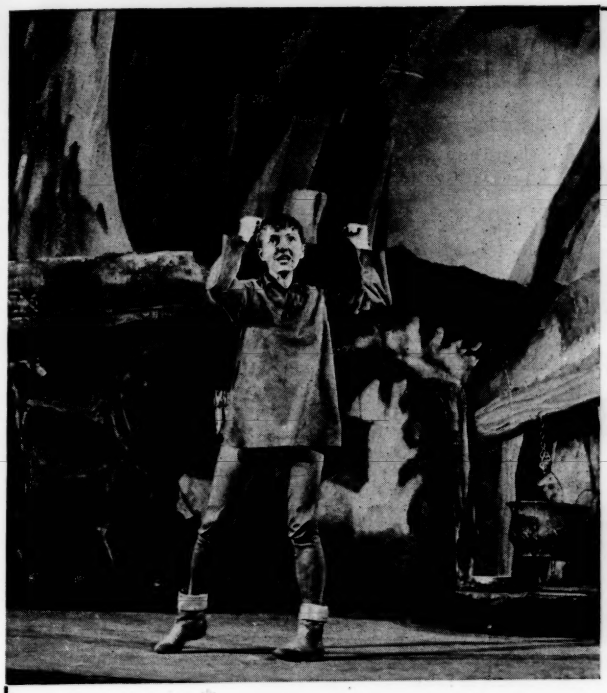

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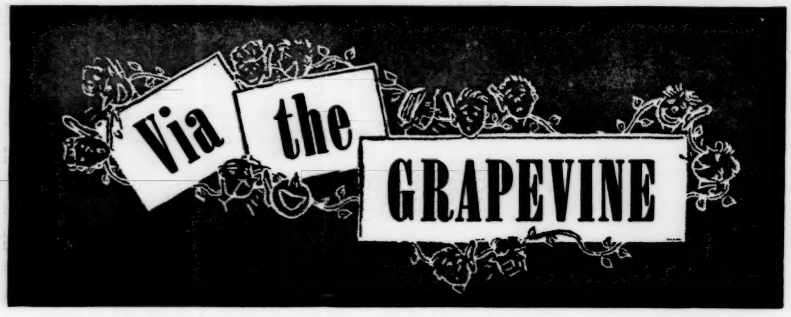

A.G.M.A. PROPOSES RETIREMENT PLAN FOR DANCERS at its 2nd Annual Convention

The radical notion that dancers ought to have some security in their old age (put at 40 by the unexpectedly humorous New York Times) raised its inquiring head at the 2nd annual convention of the American Guild of Musical Artists (A.G.M.A.). A.G.M.A., an affiliate of the four A's (and A.F.L.) held its convention at the Hotel Lincoln in New York City in three days of session, ending June 18th.

The proceedings were enlivened by a welcoming speech by his honour, Mayor William O'Dwyer of New York City, who remarked that, ". . . . sometimes we forget that the musician must eat and live in a decent house and raise a family and do all the practical things that every one of us is confronted with. . ." A remark that goes double for dancers.

Over 60 delegates from leading cities in the U.S.A. heard reports about local situations in their cities, as well as an over all report of the national executive secretary, Mr. Hyman R. Faine.

The three days of session resulted in resolutions against the Taft-Hartley law, in favour of the elimination of the 20% admission tax (to theatres) and called for the granting of social security and unemployment benefits to musical artists (including dancers) most of whom are employed by non-profit making organizations not covered by federal social security laws.

Serious attention was given the plight of dancers, whose retirement age is long before the 60 or 65 fixed by the federal laws; therefore, a retirement plan to be paid for jointly by the dancers and their employers was approved by the delegates.

If adopted by the ballet companies presently operating in the field, it would affect an estimated two or three hundred artists now active in the field. Under the plan, dancers will contribute 3% of their salaries and employers 5% toward the retirement fund which would accumulate over a 20 year period. The plan would cover all dance companies under the jurisdiction of A.G.M.A. It must be pointed out that this summer, therefore, becomes a sort of crucial point in the dancer's struggle toward security, as most active companies' agreements with A.G.M.A. terminate this summer and renewals must hold previously made gains for the dancer, as well as advancing the retirement plan.

Delegates also passed a resolution to support the coming National Theatre Assembly to be held in Washington, D. C., January, 1951, to work out a program for federal aid to the performing arts.

LONDON hits the jackpot this month, with two major American dance attractions playing simultaneously in its pleasant purlieus: the New York City Ballet at the Royal Opera, and **Martha Graham and Company** at the Piccadilly in a three week season beginning July 17. The arrangement for the Graham season in London was backed by no less a person than the general administrator of the Covent Garden Opera Trust, **David Webster,** and makes it possible for the London dance-going public to tear itself in two rushing across Soho between the Piccadilly and the Opera House — an ideal arrangement.

Miss Graham's London season follows upon her debut in Paris which occurred June 27 at the Théatre des Champs Elysées. Her appearances in Europe outside these two capitals look dubious, this year, at least; timing and climate threw the monkey wrench into more inclusive arrangements.

The London season should at least put an idea, if anything can, into the heads of American dancers bent upon European professional work. The die-hard notion that Paris is the great artistic Mecca it used to be and necessarily must be should have been rooted out by the scandal over the debut of the company which called itself Les Ballets Americain—although this event was a purely symptomatic and hardly totally revealing of the social and artistic sickness in France. The sickness goes much deeper than the affair of the American dancers vs. the Paris Opera claque the night of May 8, 1950.

Actually, the center of gravity has shifted. Dancers looking for large scale intelligent and receptive audiences had better start looking north of the channel.

★

The **New York City Ballet,** its personnel and executive staff will be flown from New York to London July 3rd by TWA (carrying in its load one famous dance critic known to those who read the New York Times). Flying, sailing and rowing in their wake is a wave of friends and balletomanes who want to be on hand for the Victorious Opening. Chief among this company are that famous balletomane couple, the **Leo Perpers,** without whom a New York opening just wouldn't look like an authentic opening. New Yorkers who just couldn't make it will have to take consolation from the fact that the London opening will be graced by the most steadfast of our balletomanes.

Ballet Theatre, its staff and personnel, is slated to be flown, by grace of the U.S. Army Air Force, no sooner than August 1st, as the company has a definite date at the Lewisohn Stadium, in New York, July 8th and a tentative date in the Robin Hood Dell, in Philadelphia the same month. Ballet Theatre will open its European tour in Germany, and will remain in Europe five months appearing in Edinburgh, London, Venice, Paris, Holland, Belgium and Vienna.

★

Jean Babilée, first dancer of the defunct Ballets des Champs Elysées, and one of the great European dancers, will be seen by America this autumn when he appears with the **Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo** in its American debut. This company, having concluded its Spanish season June 26th, goes to Lyons, thence to Holland July 2-16 and at the Zoute Festival, July 17-19. After a number of single performances at Evian

(Continued on Page 6)

Lillian Moore, one of the headliners on the July calendar of the Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival at Lee, Mass., seen here in action shot in her Viennese-flavoured "Galop".

Dance MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXIV NUMBER 7

JULY, 1950

The LARGEST,
most WIDELY READ
Dance Publication in the WORLD

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ON the COVER:

TED SHAWN in his solo work "Prometheus Bound", which may be revived by him for the current festival program at Jacobs Pillow. This prize-winning photograph by ERIC SANFORD is on exhibit with other photos and Shawn memorabilia in the exhibit arranged by Arthur Todd and to be seen at the New York Public Library (central branch) in July and August.

Editor and Publisher: Rudolf Orthwine

Executive Editor: Helen Dzhermolinska

Advertising Manager: LYDIA JOEL
Circulation Manager: BARBARA PLATT
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Ballroom Editors.....Albert and Josephine Butler
Young Dancer Editor.....Lydia Joel

Associate Editors
Ann Barzel — Doris Hering
Lydia Joel — Mary Jane Hungerford

Contributing Editors:
Jack Cole, Blanche Evan, Milton Feher, Baird Hastings, Gertrude Lippincott, Lillian Moore, Eileen O'Connor, W. G. Raffé, Hope Sheridan, Walter Terry, Arthur Todd, A. E. Twysden.

Staff Photographers:
Earl Leaf — Walter E. Owen
Fred Fehl — Gerda Peterich
West Coast Photographer: Constantine

Staff Correspondents:
England: Mary Clarke, 6 Dulwich Common, London, S. E. 21
Paris: Golda G. Antignac, 52 Avenue Duquesne
Montreal: Francis A. Coleman, 2105 City Councillors St.
Mexico: Patricia Fent Ross, Calle Tijuana 22
Chicago: Ann Barzel, 3134 W. 16th St.
San Francisco: Beatrice de Baltazar, 824 Hyde
Los Angeles: Joan Wilcoxon
Road Correspondent: SENIA SOLOMONOFF

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS:
Deadline for advertising is the 20th of the 2nd month preceding publication, e. g.: June 20th for the August issue, July 20th for the September issue.

NEW YORK OFFICES: 503 WEST 33rd STREET LO 3-5907 and JU 2-4523

DANCE Magazine, published monthly by DANCE Magazine, 503 W. 33 St., New York 1, N. Y. Rudolf Orthwine, owner and publisher. Reentered as second-class matter August 17, 1948, at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

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Printed in U. S. A. Subscription prices: United States and possessions, 1 year $3.75, two years $6.50; Pan-American and Canada, 1 year $4.00, two years $7.00; other foreign, 1 year $4.75, two years $7.50. Single copies at 35 cents. Two weeks notice is required for a change of address or for a new subscription. List address exactly as it appeared on the wrapper of last magazine received.

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RAY BOLGER says:
"It should be on the desk, in the library of everyone interested in the Dance!"

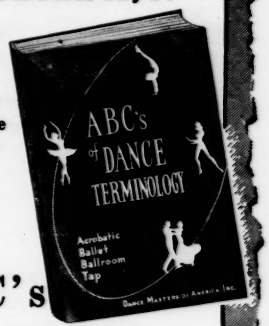

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photo: Maurice Seymour

Romola James, noted Chicago dancer, as she appeared in recent Spring concert for the Chicago Ballet Guild.

Two backstage candid snapshots taken at recent Chicago Ballet Guild show. In photo at right, Barbara Steele and Bentley Stone warm up before show.

photo: Ray Schwed

"Yankee Songs" a group ballet with performers Patrick Heim, Walter Camryn, Janet Campbell and Billy Reilly, as they appeared in actual performance for recent benefit given by the Chicago Ballet Guild.

and Aix-les-Bains, it goes to Paris for a one-week season at the Theatre des Champs Elysées July 31-August 6. A feature of the Holland engagement of the Marquis de Cuevas' company will be the appearance of **Pierre Monteux** as conductor of Stravinsky's PETROUCHKA (with original Benois decors) to celebrate Monteux's 50th anniversary as a conductor. Monteux was the original conductor of this classic Russian opus, as well as conductor for the first Diaghilev seasons in Paris over forty years ago.

★

Alicia Markova has lost her appendix. It happened in London just before the season at Albert Hall of the Markova-Dolin company. The ballerina is in a nursing home and reported convalescing satisfactorily . . . Before 22,000 tickets had to be returned by the box office, the season was saved by grace of the management of Covent Garden Royal Opera, which

photo: Ray Schwed

photo: Ray Schwed

permitted Violetta Elvin leave of absence from Sadler's Wells to take over Markova's roles . . . The tide is still to the east and among Americans headed for Europe are **Ruth Harris** to Israel, **Jan Veen** and **Juana de Laban** to Switzerland. Almost the only traveller headed the other way is **Barton Mumaw** who arrives from South Africa after a triumphant 18 month appearance in concert and with the musical "Annie Get Your Gun" . . . Remember **Nita Naldi**? Or can't you admit remembering the siren of the silent screen? Miss Naldi is currently a dancing teacher and will spend the summer teaching at the Marblehead, Mass. Playhouse where Nancy Walker (and others) are to reappear in ON THE TOWN . . . Another dance critic succumbs (and why ever not?) and **Tom Jordan** of the Louisville, Ky. Courrier-Journal will cross the footlights to appear as dancer and choreographer this fall in a commissioned concert on the series sponsored by the Committee of Art of the Woman's Club of Louisville . . . **Pearl Primus** was awarded a citation this month as the Lady of the Year in her field (arts) by the National Council of Negro Women, specifically, for ". . . outstanding contribution to social justice and world peace . . ." This is the second such honour to be received by Miss Primus within a six month period, the other having been a decoration called The Star of Africa, previously awarded only to top ranking military and ambassadorial individuals. The award was given her by His Excellency, William Tubman, the president of Liberia.

★

The verdict is in on the ballet for the season 1950-51 at the Metropolitan Opera. Ballet Theatre, which will direct the ballets at the opera, has signed 36 dancers in three auditions given last month. Of these 36, 25 are girls, and 11 are boys. Fifteen members of the former company have been re-engaged for the next season to commence October 1, as follows: **Sylvia Dick, Emilka Hulova, Natalie Kelepovska, Silvia Kemp, Gudrun Lober, Tilda Morse, Lorraine Ruess, Elaine Saporta, Alexandra Sawicka, Peggy Smithers, Rosine Snyder, Larry Boyette, Alfredo Corvino, Karl Klauser** and **Willard Leroux.**

The twenty-one new dancers are: **Suzanne Ames, Madeleine Artieres, Francine Bond, Saura Gesben, Alice Green, Janet Lowenstein, Gloria Lyons, Zebra Nevins, Rosa Rolland, Gisella Weidner, June Weiner, Barbara Wilde, Sallie Wilson, Rosemary Williams, Leo Gerard, Jack Harwood, Marc Hertsens, Loren Hightower, Donald Harvey Jung, Adelino Palomanos** and **Maurice Rios.**

As announced in this column several months ago, **Nana Gollner** will be installed as prima ballerina. **Lucia Chase, Anthony Tudor** and **Margaret Craske** sat in judgment at auditions. The ballet and school will be jointly directed by Mr. Tudor and Miss Craske, as assistant.

★

The **St. Louis Municipal Opera,** an incubator which has started many dancers on careers, will wallow in some big names this summer. Soloists include **James Mit-**

chell, **Virginia Bosler** and **Olga Lunick** in BRIGADOON, June 8-18; **Dorothy Keller** in ROSALIE, June 19-25, **Muriel Bentley, Buster West** and **Lucille Page** in EAST WIND (June 26-July 2), **Joan Holloway** in OF THEE I SING, July 3-9, **Ruthanna Boris** and **Leon Danielian** in ROBIN HOOD, July 10-16, **Lidja Franklin** in DESERT SONG, July 24-30, **Patricia Bowman** and **Rudy Kroeller** in PINK LADY, July 31-August 6, **Kenneth MacKenzie, Dusty Worrall** and **Diane Keith** in CAROUSEL, Aug. 21-Sept. 3.

Anthony Nelle is ballet master for the operas and **John Butler** is modern dance director.

★

Nice to report, **STAGE FOR DANCERS,** initiated as an experiment in concert dance at the Brooklyn Museum last season by director **Fred Berk,** is not only to have another season, but an impressive one—and the Museum will build a new stage for the dancers, to take the place of the mere platform previously used. The calendar reads, as follows:

October 4
Saida Gerard, Peter Hamilton and company

November 1
Dorothea Buchholz, Miriam Cole, Eve Gentry, Yuriko and company

December 6
Iris Mabry, Katya Delakova and Fred Berk

January 3
Natanya Neumann, Emily Frankel, Mark Ryder

February 7
Louis Horst in lecture-demonstration

March 7
Jean Erdman, Nina Fonaroff, Hadassah.

April 4
Helen McGehee, Josef Gifford, Lucas Hoving and Nona Schurman

May 2
Doris Ebener, Lavina Nielsen, Alwin Nikolais and Henry Street Playhouse group.

★

Charles Weidman flew out to Ann Arbor, Michigan on June 3rd to take solo lead and direct dances for the Langston Hughes opera, THE BARRIER, which is to have a Broadway premiere some time this summer. **Jo Keene** and **Helene Ellis** danced other leads.

William Hooks and **Paula Caputa** won scholarships in the Weidman school in an audition competition which took place at the Studio Theatre May 20th.

★

3rd AMERICAN DANCE FESTIVAL
To Offer New Works

Rehearsals are under way for new works to be presented at the 3rd annual American Dance Festival which takes place at Connecticut College, New London, Conn., in August. Jose Limon and his company will appear in three totally new works. Two are duos; a third is a group work. One duo derives from early Mexico, with Limon and Hoving as protagonists; the other is with Letitia Ide. None are as yet titled.

Sophie Maslow will complete the second part of a two-part work based on the suite "The Village I Knew", the first part

Venita Louise, rising young dancer of Washington, D. C., as she appeared in recent performances of the Ballet Soiree of that city. This group, under the direction of Marion Venable, is to re-organize on a larger and more professional scale, to be called the National Ballet and will debut in the Fall. Miss Louise and her teacher, Miss Venable, together with other prominent Washington dancers, sailed last month for summer study in London and Paris.

Twice acclaimed World Champion ballroom dancers Fred Morrison and Eve Lawless of England will appear at the Dancers International "Holiday in Hollywood" July 14-23 as featured members of the faculty. Charley Baker is president of this group.

photo: Ethel Pries

Karla, western dancer who has adapted oriental dances to dancelogue "sketches" easily comprehensible to western audiences, has appeared in authentic dances of India, Siam, Java, Bali, etc., in films, TV, cabaret in America and in France. She appeared in two New York concerts this spring.

Chinese dancer Ming Chu, alumna of U.S.O. shows, the Folies Bergere and other top cabaret productions in the U.S.A. and abroad, has recently graduated into star billing on ABC-TV. She will be seen on the concert stage this fall, and is currently in rehearsal for solo concert work.

of which, called FESTIVAL, was premiered at New London and scored a success later in New York during first season of the New York City Dance Theatre. Jane Dudley is readying a group work and William Bales will offer a new solo this summer.

★

Dance Events on the Summer Calendar at PERRY-MANSFIELD.

Colorado has its own dance festival, centered in the **Perry-Mansfield Theatre School** at Steamboat Springs, certainly on artistic par with some of the big dance events of the summer in the east.

Harriette Anne Grey, head of the modern dance school at P.M. is readying a full program of modern dance to be presented as "Ballet Ballads", no relation to the Moross-Latouche thing of the same name. Miss Grey will compose incidental choreography of the "Good Woman of Setzuan", a work to be shown at the U. of Wyoming and elsewhere, and at the end of the summer session will appear in recital with members of the apprentice group, offering a new work, as yet untitled.

This year Perry-Mansfield and the town of Steamboat Springs are joint sponsors of the first state-wide Square Dance Festival, which is to be a competition to be held on the rodeo grounds, because no other place in Colorado is large enough to hold the teams already entered. Ricky Holden of San Antonio will be the caller.

★

Musicals of the next season are just showing up on the horizon — and give good promise of lots of jobs for all (everyone hopes!) Choreographers are not yet set for all, but those desiring audition information can usually find out by calling office of the producer. These are the prospects:

Booth Tarkington's classic of adolescence, **"Seventeen",** choreographer, Gower Champion, producer, Sammy Lambert. Auditions early July. . . **"A Tree Grows In Brooklyn"** (musical version), producer, George Abbott. . . **"John Murray Anderson's Almanac"**; producer, John Murray Anderson. . . **"Finnegan's Wake"**; choreographer, Antony Tudor, producer, Ned Armstrong. . . **"Musical Comedy Man"** (all about George M. Cohan), producer, Milton Baron. . . **"The Impossible Forest"** (a musical fairy tale), choreographer, Hanya Holm, producer, Rogers Brackett. . . **"Wedding Day"**, producer. Stewart Chaney. . . **"Paint Your Wagon",** producer, Cheryl Crawford. . . **"The Golden Apple"**, producer, Cheryl Crawford. . . **"Toyland"**, producer, Cheryl Crawford. . . **Guys and Dolls"**, choreographer, Michael Kidd, producer, Feuer and Martin. . . **"Messers Marco Polo"**, producer, S. Gilkey and Don Onslaeger. . . **"Call Me Madam"**, producer, Leland Hayward. . . **"Sounds Like Music"**, producer, D. Kantor & A. Manson. . . **"Bless You All"**, producers Herman Levin and Oliver Smith. . . **"Number One Girl"** (this one is about Omar Khayyam at the age of 20, yet!), producers, Arthur Levy and Chas. Stewart. . . **"Huckleberry Finn"**, producer, Playwrights Company. . .

(Continued on page 45)

Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival
1950 Calendar

Friday and Saturday afternoons at 4:00
Friday and Saturday nights at 9:00

	June 30 and July 1	
NANA GOLLNER and PAUL PETROFF	POLA NIRENSKA	JEAN LEON DESTINE and JEANNE RAMON
	July 7 and 8	
The Ballet Guild, presents "Intaglio" with DAVID TIHMAR, BETTINA ROSAY, JANICE CIOFFI, etc.	PETER HAMILTON and Co.	MARA and company, guest artists: CHAO-LI CHI and MICHIKO
	July 14 and 15	
NANA GOLLNER and PAUL PETROFF	EMILY FRANKEL and MARK RYDER	JOSEFINA GARCIA
	July 21 and 22	
LILLIAN MOORE	JOSE LIMON and company	PEARL PRIMUS

Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons at 4:00
Wednesday, Friday and Saturday nights at 9:00

	July 26, 27, 28 and 29	
MIA SLAVENSKA and company; guest artists: ANNA ISTOMINA and NIKITA TALIN	IVA KITCHELL	LA MERI
	August 2, 3, 4, 5	
BOCCINO and company present "Micaela"	MYRA KINCH	LA MERI and PETER di FALCO
HERBERT ROSS-John Ward company present "Capri-chos"	TED SHAWN	LA MERI and co.

Friday and Saturday afternoons at 4:00
Friday and Saturday nights at 9:00

	August 18 and 19	
PATRICIA BOWMAN	MYRA KINCH and company	LA MERI and PETER di FALCO
	August 25 and 26	
ROSS-WARD company in premiere of new ballet	TED SHAWN and Company in "Mountain Whippoorwill"	LA MERI
	September 1 and 2	
ANNA ISTOMINA and LEON DANIELIAN, with Aubrey Hitchins ballet	"The Invisible Wife" with Theatre Dance company	LA MERI in premiere of "Danzas Fantasticas"

9 Monday Night Lectures

July	3	**Dr. Josephine Rathbone**	"Why not Relax?"
	10	**Dr. Elizabeth Burchenal**	"Origins and Growth of American Folk Dance"
	17	**Pearl Primus**	"Dark Rhythms"
	24	**Walter Terry**	"Dance Immortals"
	31	**Josefina Garcia**	"Dances of Mexico"
August	7	**La Meri**	"Ethnic dance — its value to education"
	14	**Ted Shawn**	"Dance Roots — the value of primitive dance"
	21	**Anatole Chujoy**	"American Dance and Dancers in Europe — 1950"
	28	**Doris Humphrey**	"Choreography"

Extra lecture on July 4 by John Lindquist: "A pictorial history of Jacob's Pillow".

Just PEOPLE and PLACES

photo: Ken Whitmore

Devi Dja's final appearance in America as teacher, before returning to her native Indonesia, took place at the American School of Dance in Hollywood, in a course of Indonesian dance. At this party given for Miss Dja, a number of interesting guests appeared, from l. to r. Kathrine Mershon, Ruth St. Denis, Paul Ballard, Miss Dja and Eugene Loring, director of the school.

photo: Leo Friedman

¶ Signing operation in the historic precincts of the Met. Oliver Smith and Lucia Chase, co-directors of Ballet Theatre and new general manager of the Metropolitan Opera, Rudolf Bing (right) meet to conclude the one-year contract between the Opera and the Ballet Theatre, season 1950-51.

photo: G. B. L. WILSON

Dancers in action in favorite off-stage hobby: eating! These festivities took place in the menage Skibine in Monte Carlo when members of Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo met to celebrate Russian Easter. Seated from l. to r. Nicholas Orloff, Anna Cheselka and Marjorie Tallchief. Standing, l. to r. Sasha Rodzianko, Kiryl Vassilkovsky, June Morris and George Skibine.

photo: John Brefach

In a corner of the New York Public Library, which sponsors this month and next an exhibit to be called "TED SHAWN — American Dancer", Mr. Shawn makes explanatory remarks about memorabilia in exhibit to small audience of, (l. to r.), Helen Dzhermolinska, Margaret Craske, Genevieve Oswald (dance reference librarian of the N.Y.P.L.) and Herbert Ross.

by

Doris Hering

HADASSAH, one of our most distinguished exponents of Eastern dance, has finally taken the big step and organized a company of her own. They made a handsome debut on June 4 at the 92nd Street "Y".

Since she was working with young Americans who have had little experience in her highly specialized idiom, Hadassah wisely did not try to develop any individual virtuosos. Instead, she concentrated on homogeneity among the dancers and on a proper balance between their somewhat athletic style and her own exquisite presence.

That she achieved this delicate balance is a special tribute to her personal integrity. For Hadassah is the very embodiment of humility. The expression of angelic quietude on her face, the gentle detachment of her gestures, make her seem like a true vessel of the gods in an art where godliness is more to be prized than mere invention.

But she does not bury herself in a world of shadowy ecstasy. She has absorbed many of the affirmative characteristics of our American modern dance, and these added dimension to her group choreography.

For example, in DEVA PUJA the four male gods **(Harry Duggins, John Fealy, Xavier Francis,** and **Eric Young)** implore the Goddess Gauri to rouse Shiva from his meditation so that the universe will not dissolve. To give their entreaty greater urgency, Hadassah emphasized unison formations. But in the Indonesian trio, LAMENT, she used her girls **(Shulamith Fain, Rose Krevit,** and **Sylvia Maier)** in varying levels and dynamic contrast to give the impression of emotional spontaneity. And in ZAMRI LI, an Israeli song of yearning, she designed her choreography contrapuntally, as though she were weaving a two-part invention. This, too, was consistent with the somewhat abstract nature of the duet.

The program was carefully balanced among Hindu, Indonesian, Israeli, and just plain funny dancing. The Hindu CHANT (accompanied by Gandhi's favorite song) proved too rapid for the group. But with more experience they should be able to execute its serpentine floor patterns with the required legato.

Hadassah's infallible sense of mood and atmosphere gave the Indonesian suite a sustained, almost introspective quality that contrasted perfectly with the greater sophistication of the Hindu dancing. And, surprisingly, this mood was achieved with a minimum of complicated gesture.

It would be difficult to find Israeli dancing done with more love and awareness of its beautiful oriental nuance. The HORA, with its use of finger cymbals and scarves, seemed close to a ritual origin, and Hadassah's solo, GAMAL-GAMALI, in which a poor camel driver speaks to his beast, captured the balance between pathos and humor that is the wonderful heritage of the Jewish peoples.

The broadly satiric BROADWAY HINDU has become a classic of its kind. And WHO'S NORMAL?, a devastating new piece for Hadassah and the boys, should soon follow suit. It was a kinetic potpourri with all sorts of maddening movement references done at breakneck speed and with an air of deadpan innocence that nicely clothed the barbs directed toward companies who think that glittering costumes and props constitute Oriental dance.

Not that Hadassah was by any means lax on that score! Women's Wear Daily could have devoted a whole issue to the color and craftsmanship that went into every costume. In fact, the entire concert was a model of craftsmanship, taste, and artistic integrity. Experiences like this are indeed rare.

★

The Studio Theatre was host to a pair of Sunday Evening concerts (May 7 and 14) by **Eve Gentry, Maxine Munt, Alfred Brooks,** and their companies. The dancers had to contend with production obstacles that include faulty lighting and an uncooperative phonograph, but the concert's main problem did not lie in this direction. It had to do with style.

Our dictionary defines "style" as "a particular, distinctive, or characteristic mode or form of construction or execution." For us it is the elusive entity that distinguishes the composition of the amateur from that of the professional — that is very close to what Hindu aestheticians call "rasa" or "flavor" — that stems from constants like period, form, and nationality — that has to do, above all, with the composer's viewpoint toward his material.

For example, Maxine Munt premiered a lively group work called MY TURN. Like Jerome Robbins' INTERPLAY, it was a semi-abstraction based upon the prankishness of young people. But unlike its predecessor, MY TURN lacked a viewpoint, hence a style. The action of INTERPLAY, no matter how flippant, is based upon serious and solid emotion. One readily senses the combined joy and solemnity of being young.

But in Miss Munt's piece there was no such core. In addition, there were disturbing random gestural fragments unmotivated either by subject matter or by preceding movements. These marred an otherwise intelligent grasp of space and grouping.

Alfred Brooks' long Medieval allegory, FAUVEL, also had style trouble. When one deals with a Fourteenth Century tale about a horse-headed demagogue and the triumph of Virginity, one must certainly have a viewpoint about it. If the idea is conceived as serious, then the work should be highly stylized so that a modern audience can readily comprehend the Medieval point of view about such matters. And if it is regarded as comic, let it be unabashedly so! (As was Nina Fonaroff's Medieval sortie, OF SONDRY WIMMEN).

Instead of coming to grips with this problem, Mr. Brooks spread his energy over the creation of words, music, and choreography, all of which remained separate and independent for want of the unifying influence of style.

Eve Gentry's portion of the program consisted of familiar works from her solo and group repertoire. Her solos were, without a doubt, the most professional offerings of the evening.

★

(Continued on page 39)

The TRIUMPH of the EGO

the legacy of Isadora Duncan

Isadora Duncan in Paris, 1900.

Isadora in the garden of her house at Meudon, 1919.

Isadora in Paris, 1919, receives a citation from American Red Cross officer on behalf of her work done for wounded Americans in France.

by Juana de Laban

IN TWO PARTS

Part I

EACH epoch contributes something to the world's social and cultural background in the form of self-realization and self-expression. For long periods in our history the dominating styles of the dance were part of a development which, essentially, belonged to another art form: the drama and the opera. If we regard the dance as an independent art form, we must first recall that in the late 19th century it had arrived at a point of utter mechanization, and complete hopelessness as to content matter. It was no longer a medium of revitalizing entertainment, but a mere exhibition of brilliantly trained bodies. Heart and essence of the dance experience was lost, and the dance degenerated into a meaningless show. It lacked instinctive and absolute conviction. Only Isadora Duncan's appearance restored this lack of belief. She sought her inspiration in

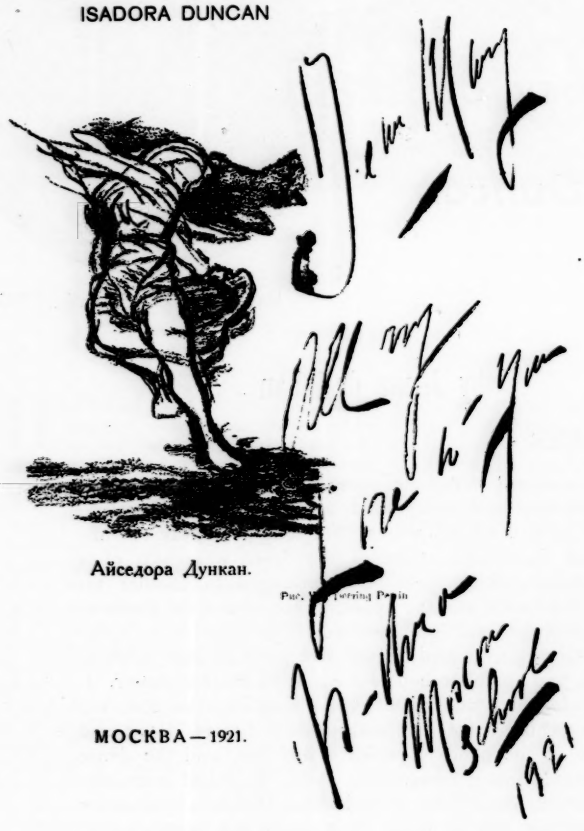
Hitherto unpublished study of Isadora, made by Arnold Genthe.

from the collection of Mary Fanton Roberts

from the collection of Mary Fanton Roberts

АЙСЕДОРА ДУНКАН

ISADORA DUNCAN



Facsimile of cover of program, Moscow, 1921. The inscription is to Mary Fanton Roberts, a life-long friend of Isadora.

the legacy of .

the unity of all life and made manifest its highest good and freedom. All she offered to the world poured forth from her inner voice and her innermost philosophy.

Isadora Duncan's essential contribution lies in the recognition of what we may call "the triumph of the ego." The foundation of her art lay in her indomitable belief in herself and her strong sense of freedom for the arts. She dared to abandon the path of long established forms and, through her own efforts, brought about a reformation which was to usher in the new era of the Modern Dance.

Nothing is absolutely new. The new dance was mainly a matter of selection and emphasis, but not a difference of a specific attempt. In regard to the world and its standards of art we may understand the position of Isadora, who, in the full strength of her youth and belief, knew that a change in the concept of the dance was inevitable. As a true scholar of art, she had to experience and solve many problems until she finally found her way into the new dance she envisioned for the world. Her major achievements were eventually based on the bare beginnings of an evolution of the whole dance field. Isadora's thought-expressions slowly shaped into a theory of the modern dance and are now recognized as the basic dance concept. The actual principle of this dance which were evolved by and emerged from many untold dancers give full praise to the contribution of the great reformer Isadora Duncan.

Every nation must solve its own problems and Isadora felt with certainty that her dream of a dance art could not find immediate realization in her native America. She ventured to many countries in the world, searching for a place to initiate, to perform, to teach and to present to mankind the new gospel.

At the turn of the century Europe was receptive to progressive innovations; practically all the other arts were in a state of flux. Painting, with Manet, Lautrec, Matisse, and Picasso, had discovered the "time and space concept" as a free perspective of untold possibilities. Scupture, with Carpeaux and Rodin, shifted its emphasis towards a free direction rather than aiming at ends. Literature, with Whitman, Hugo, Stendhal, James and Wilde, broke away from factual telltale, concentrating instead upon the eternal aspirations of man toward the basic needs of his daily life. Music, with Wagner, Debussy, Reger and Tschaikovsky, found new harmonic qualities to bring before the listener. The theatre movement, with Appia, Bakst, Benois, D'Annunzio, Craig and Stanislavsky, was concerned with discoveries along all its branches to create a new histrionic magic for the 20th century.

How far Isadora succeeded in her aim to create a new dance, may still be subject to question, but we must admit that it was she who unleashed the force that carried the dance to its triumph. Isadora expressed it very well when she said: "America has fashioned me as it does most of its youth—a puritan, a mystic and a striver after the heroic expression rather than any sensual expression whatever." If her language spoke directly to the heart, no less did it reflect a great mind and philosophy. It was by the clear concept of the true aims that she rose to such glory in Europe of which she recalled: "The extraordinary spirit (geist) of the feeling of Holiness (the holiness of thought) that I met, made me often feel as if I had been introduced into a world of superior and Godlike thinkers, the working of whose brains was far vaster, holier, ideals than I had encountered in the world of my travels. Here (Europe), indeed, the philosophic conception seemed to be regarded as the highest point of man's satisfaction, only to be equalled by the still holier world of music." There she had a chance to reawaken a form of dance expression which could be called dance lyrics, in contrast to the mainly dramatic dance forms of the ballet.

Isadora's odyssey began in America's Golden West

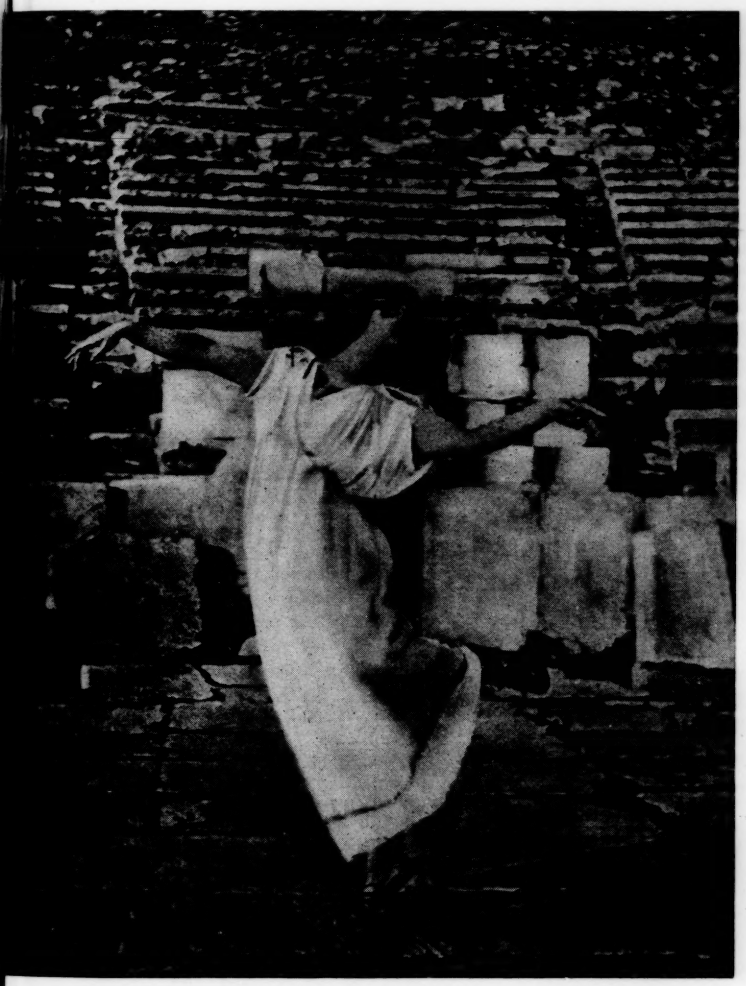
. Isadora Duncan

whence she travelled East in search of inspiration. Being put to the test by her own resources she abandoned a career which could not offer her an opportunity to explore the unknown. She continued her travels to Europe, crossing the continent in the vague manner of a talented adolescent. It was finally established that in order to be able to give a message to the world she had to visit the cradle of the dance,

(*Continued on page* 38)

from the collection of Mary Fanton Roberts

Portrait of Isadora made in Paris, 1910.



Isadora Duncan dancing in the Theatre of Bacchus at Athens.

A page from the secret archives of the Imperial Russian Ballet. This page, size 21x12 inches in the original, shows how the STEPANOV dance script was used by N. Serqueéff to record the full ballet staging of THE BAYADERE.

This record has never before been published. These records are the SOLE SOURCES of the famous classic Russian ballets available in Europe and America.

The STEPANOV method is set in staves like an orchestral score; the upper clef contains the corps de ballet or other back-stage groups; the middle clef has the soloists positions, while the lower clef carries the choreographic schemes for the principal dancer, all in tempo with the music in the bars. Each ballet fills one album, each page one number kept in line with the music.

NICOLAI SERGUEÉFF

vessel of the Russian Heritage

by **W. G. Raffé**

Editor's Foreword:

THIS article, written especially for DANCE MAGAZINE by Dr. W. G. Raffé, describes the facts from his personal knowledge of the various versions of the classic Russian ballets of the 19th century. He reveals for the first time some of the facts about our wonderful heritage in these great ballets. From the Maestro's carefully hoarded treasures, Dr. Raffé has for the first and only time, persuaded him to permit reproduction of an extract of the Stepanov system of dance notation reproduced in these pages.

NICOLAI SERGUEÉFF, former *regisseur-general* in the famous Marie Theatre in St. Petersburg, possesses a wonderful series of recorded classical ballets, which he gathered from the splendid array of Russian productions of the 19th century. As student, dancer, ballet-master and regisseur, he had continuous and direct access to every aspect of production, so that his carefully written records of 23 classical ballets have provided the sole source for western European continuance of the most highly developed ballet tradition in Europe. More than half of these records, each occupying a great book, is accompanied by the ballet music, some in orchestral score, some for piano and violin.

From each of these twenty-three unique volumes, Nicolai Sergueéff is able to construct and produce some famous Russian ballet of Petipa and Ivanov. From this single source, all the non-Russian productions of these ballets have stemmed, beginning with the famous London performances of THE SLEEPING BEAUTY in 1921. Diaghilev met Sergueéff in Paris in 1920 and the two planned this splendid production together, using all the available star dancers of the period. These eagerly consented to appear, while many names now famous then made their first contact with the authentic form, derived from the Sergueéff records made in the Stepanov system of ballet notation.

★

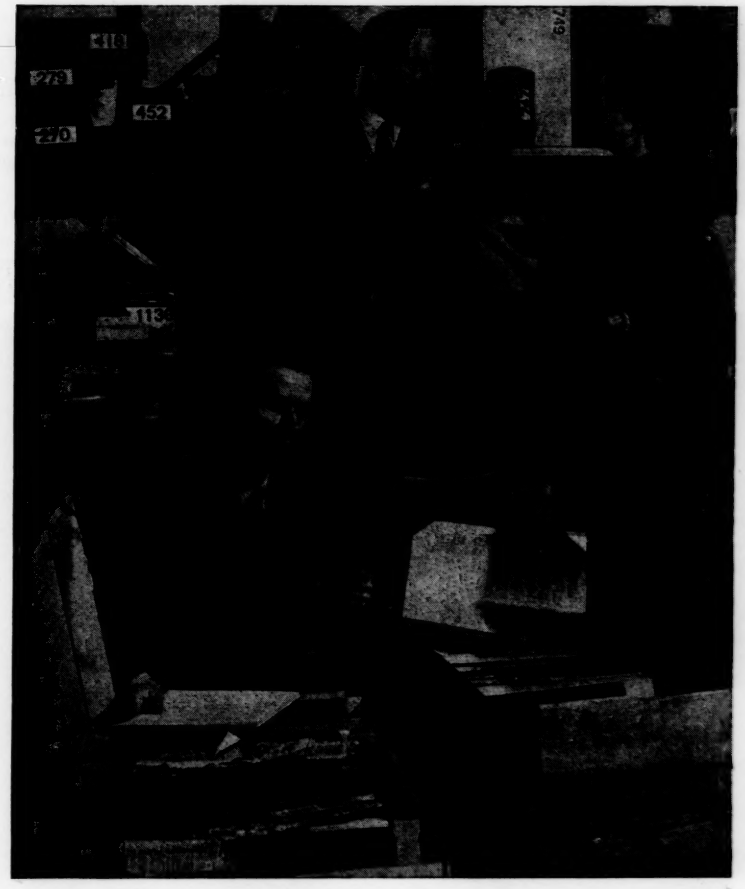
Although I do not at this time intend to describe the Stepanov notation system in exact detail, it is necessary to clear up one important point which allows confusion if not clearly grasped by the reader.

There are a number of dance notation

1900. A classroom in the Imperial School, St. Petersburg. Nicolai Serqueéff conducts a rehearsal of the ensemble of the Imperial Maryinsky Theatre in Koniok Gorbunok (The Little Wishing Pony, also known as the Humpbacked Horse), a ballet adapted by Marius Petipa after St. Leon.

This ballet is still in the repertory of the company in Leningrad in the same theatre, re-named the Kirov State Theatre.

In London, 1949. Nicolai Sergueéff examines archives of the Russian ballet which have travelled with him from war-torn Petrograd in 1917 through the Caucasus, then to Marsailles and Paris, and finally to London. Diaghilev literally gloated over these records when they were shown to him.



systems, of more or less facility in writing, which allow movement to be recorded. There are apparently no systems, except the Stepanov, which allow a full work to be recorded. The difference between the Stepanov method and others is like comparing the piano score with the 20 or 25 staves of a full orchestral score. It is possible to extract a piano version from an orchestral score, but the reverse, to expand a piano script to orchestral proportions is not so easily done.

★

Nicolai Grigorevich Sergueéff was born September 15, 1876 in St. Petersburg. His father was an artist who had recently finished his own training in the Imperial Academy of Art. He died young, leaving a widow with three children. Nicolai was the youngest of these. He had a happy childhood, under the tender care of a devout mother. Every summer his mother took them to their dacha (country house) at Parvoe Pergolevo on the shores of Lake Suzdal. There the children sailed their little boat, fished, swam and were happy together.

In 1884, young Nicolai entered the Imperial Theatre School in St. Petersburg, ballet section, to be trained as a dancer. For four years he attended

1950, Moscow. Children of the State School appear with ballerina Marina Semonova in THE SLEEPING BEAUTY. N. Sergueéff has staged the version seen in Moscow for the Sadler's Wells Ballet which showed this spectacle to America for the first time in 1949. N. Sergueéff has also staged this great spectacle for the International Ballet, the company with which he is presently associated.

daily classes, still living at home, but in the following six years he lived in the school, receiving also a general education. Sergueéff remembers his first teacher, N. I. Volkoff, with gratitude and affection, though his severe discipline, which laid great importance on each step, made most pupils afraid of him. When he died, says Sergueéff, some of the boys were not at all displeased!

★

His next teacher in the Imperial School was Pavel Gerdt. He was, by way of contrast, a lenient teacher. In the higher classes, Marius Petipa taught him. During this second period, the young Nicolai began to make many of those public appearances in actual performances, which the training system of the school held to be essential. In 1886 he went on in the ballet PYGMALION. Sergueéff recalls vividly taking part in the first performance of THE SLEEPING BEAUTY when he was still a student, in the Valse des Fleurs. During rehearsals, the composer, P. I. Tschaikovsky, would often come to watch, and occasionally play a few phrases on the piano. He liked children; they adored him, perhaps with an eye to the candies he usually brought for them. Richard Drigo was often there, listening to the two violins frequently used for rehearsal. In the theatre Wienavsky played, while Leopold Auer was in the orchestra. The Marie Theatre had a tradition of fine music, maintained to the present day.

Especially Sergueéff recalls the immense care and devotion to ballet and dance training which he had from Christian Johannsen. He had a profound knowledge of classical dance — and was a great genius, asserts Sergueéff, in devising *enchainements* of classical steps with exquisite elegance. He was most grateful that the old man (Johannsen was then over 90!) would come into the classroom especially to give a lesson to him. It is this style which Sergueéff is still able, in some measure, to convey to his pupils of today in London.

As contemporaries of young Sergueéff, among the one hundred fifty pupils in the school, we may enumerate Michael Fokine, Anna Pavlova, Sergei Legat and Nicolai Legat, and Obouknoff. It was about this time that a student, some ten years the senior of Sergueéff, began to devise a form of ballet notation.

This was the tiny seed of the present world-wide Russian ballet tradition.

Vladimir I. Stepanov (1866-1896) was trained first as a dancer and became a notable teacher in the Petersburg school. He began, while still young, to devise his own system of recording, and became closely associated with the chief doctor who inspected the students, the famous Professor Lesgaft, teacher of anatomy in the St. Petersburg People's University. Failing to get local publishers to issue the work, they went to Paris, where Lesgaft knew Professor Charcot of the Salpetriere Hospital. They found a publisher in Paris and the work was printed in 1892 (*Alphabet des Mouvements du Corps Humain*, by V. I. Stepanov, 66 pp., 52 ill., Zouckerman, Paris, 1892).

★

In St. Petersburg, Sergueéff worked very hard in his multiple duties of teacher, regisseur and dancer, adding to this burden his self-imposed task of the recording of the great ballets. Inevitably this work was seen and laughingly commented upon his colleagues, while Petipa more than once admonished Sergueéff, saying that he did not want *his* ballets thus to be recorded. Sergueéff, with the retort courteous, indicated that many of these ballets were *not* the work of Petipa, and that many works had been immensely helped by the assistants of Petipa, notably Lev Ivanov, although this fact was seldom publicly acknowledged at that time.

Petipa retired in 1903 and died in

(*Continued on page* 35)

N. Sergueéff casts a critical eye on ballerina Mona Inglesby and partner Ernest Hewitt, both of International Ballet, in a rehearsal for THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

Eileen O'Connor, author of this series of articles which concludes with this chapter.

FLEXING FOR BALLET

by Eileen O'Connor

CONCLUSION

For the past year-and-a-half it has been my pleasure to offer the readers of DANCE Magazine exercises to aid them in their ballet development. A supple body is a working asset; the teacher finds the supple students easier to train; the dancer finds that she can apply the knowledge in her head to the muscles of her legs and back and arms more quickly, if she has been made aware of her specialized abilities through flexing exercises.

Those among you who have followed this series from the beginning will recall my original promise to give you specific exercises for every part of the body from the toes up to the head. If you have saved each issue, or if you remember the exercises through having practised them each month, you can now plan a general program of stretching to precede each ballet-class. The teachers can use one exercise for each part of the body—starting with the *Plié de Rigueur,* followed by an exercise for the calf of the legs, one for the thigh, one for the hips, one for the waist, etc. It is unwise to concentrate altogether on stretching only one part of the body at each session; rather do one exercise for each muscle that seems tight. Of course, there are certain pupils who have supple enough legs, but whose backs are rigid; others are supple, but lack strength in the diaphragm to apply that suppleness intelligently to ballet.

Always remember that ballet is the other end of the pole from acrobatics. The exercises presented to you in this series, many of which are adapted from acrobatic-preparation, should be used in *moderation. There is such a thing as over-stretching.* Be on your guard, if you are a teacher, that you do not present these exercises to students who are already too limber. Do not insist that young children, whose bones and muscles need tightening rather than stretching, practise them. Discriminate among your pupils, present the exercises that apply to the individual case. Nothing in the correctly applied technique of ballet should injure or distort the student's body. If a great deal of contraction, as in *Relevés,* seems to be enlarging the calf of the legs, it is obvious that stretching of that muscle is necessary—*counteract any extreme contraction of a muscle with an equal amount of stretching, if you would avoid distorted muscles.*

We all have our pet-peeves. Mine has long been the horrible results that can come of incorrect ballet-training, or—worse—careless technique. The teacher of ballet takes on a great reponsibility: the development of young human bodies. Under the conscientious teacher's guidance, the child-student can develop into a first-class dancer technically, and yet retain the best features of physical appearance in later life. If parents have doubts, having seen all too many hideous muscles and distorted limbs, they need only refer to the great examples of ballerinas with beautiful forms. The greater the dancers, the more rigid their background of ballet-training, the more lovely their bodies: Anna Pavlowa, Alexandra Danilova, Alicia Markova, Margot Fonteyn, Patricia Bowman, Moira Shearer, and many others famous in the ballet-world. (The men who really train seriously in ballet develop exquisite physiques too, but at least, if a man does develop noticeable muscles through lack of stretching, it is not as unsightly as the same extreme would be in a woman's figure).

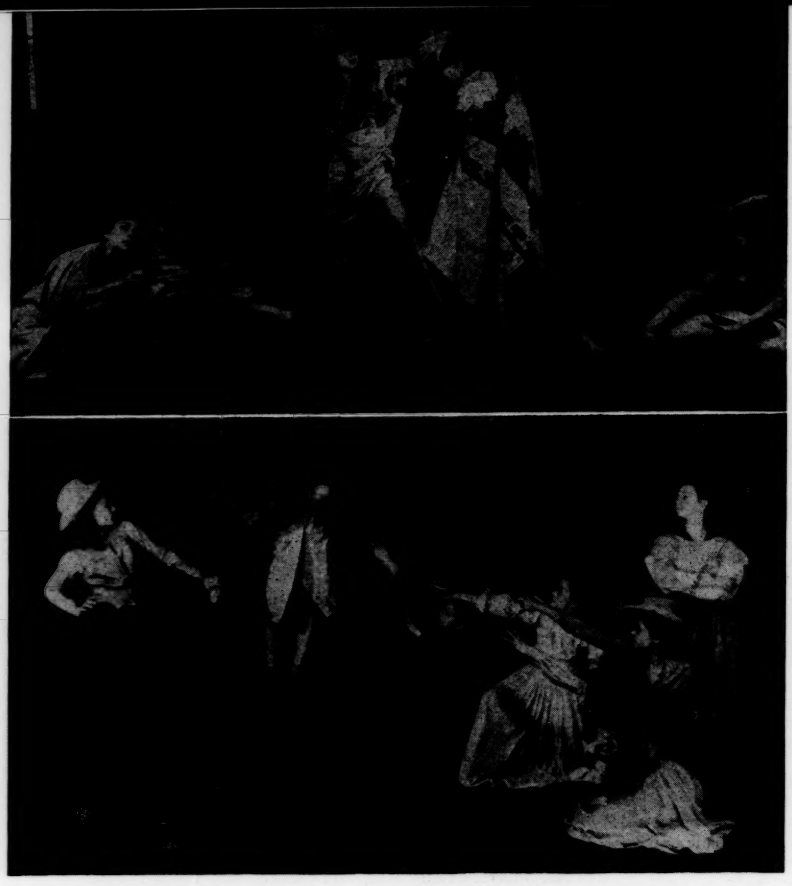
Gross muscles usually come from over-zealousness on the part of pupil, teacher, or parent. The teacher or Mother who insists that the child practise one step or one exercise over-and-over-and-over-again, without counteracting relief, is *guilty of inestimable cruelty.* Not only does the child naturally resent the particular problem, but she may become muscle-bound from overstrain. Bad training, indiscreet choice of combinations of steps in each period of dancing, can result in distorted muscles, muscle-bound legs, stiff backs, and limited danceability.

"Flexing for Ballet" has given you, teachers, students, and parents, remedies for any of the problems arising from natural stiffness or one-sided dance training. Use the exercises wisely, apply them only where and when needed, and follow the instructions as carefully as you would a doctor's prescription. Thus applied, you should benefit greatly.

I am happy that so many of you have faithfully followed this series, and I thank you all for your overwhelming response in the mail. I apologize for not having answered many of you—but the truth of the matter is that I too am a teacher, with all the pertinent problems, headaches, joys, and lack-of-time, that beset you. "Flexing for Ballet" has been the salt-and-pepper in a very crowded program—a small part of ballet-training but an important message that had to be imparted.

all photographs in this series have been executed by WALTER E. OWEN

Among the many famous dancers who have modeled for this series are the three lovely models shown on this page: Kathryn Lee, Milada Mladova and Nadia Nerina. Others have been Patricia Bowman, Violetta Elvin and Tanaquil LeClercq.



History became alive — as adolescence found release.
(Two sequences from ON FREEDOM ROAD).

article IX in the series

the CHILD'S WORLD: its relation to dance pedagogy

by Blanche Evan

IN the Spring of 1949, at the conclusion of a lyrical lesson, a seven to ten year old class spontaneously made up the following for their favorite music, Tchaikovsky's *Waltz of the Flowers*: "We are beautiful wild flowers in the field, the wind comes and blows them almost to pieces. To the King of the flowers, the Wind says: 'I will stop blowing them only if you give me your fairest flower. If not, I will take you, the King and lock you up in my Wind castle.' The King figures out that, since he doesn't want to lose any of his flowers, nor be locked up in a castle, *he will make a fake flower, and put a bomb in it, give it to the wind, so when the wind takes it to the castle, it will blow up the whole thing, wind, castle, and all.* He does this!"

The American child of this generation is a War Child — a different kind of war child from the hordes that overflow the abandoned debris shelters of Europe — but a war child nevertheless, who thinks in terms of atom bombs as well as of fairy tales. In the last war, the children who attended dance class on Saturday, engaged in siren air raid drills in the public schools during the week, and wore their identification tags under their pretty practise costumes. Many sheltered relatives that had fled fascist persecution. Many felt abandoned by fathers and brothers called to service; and some came from homes where the war was discussed consciously to build hatred for fascism, personified to the child by Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito.

It was a common sight to see kids on the streets in New York engaging in pseudo-war — I have seen a child playing alone, taking both sides, the killer and the killed.

In this atmosphere of extremest tension, there were theatre groups for children that became more pink-stained than ever, to divert the child from the horrors of the world, — as if they could! Such an attitude greatly minimizes the impact on the child of the adult world, laid bare to the child by every means of communication open to the adult.

The children need help in relating to the *real* world, they need creative channels in which to relieve the burden that our distraught adult world has placed upon their little shoulders; and they, as well as the adult, need a connecting link between the adult's tensions and their own.

With all this in mind, between the years of 1941 and 1945, I led the children to the creation of many dances indirectly and directly related to the war. Through Dance, they found constructive outlet for their pent-up feeling, and *explored all the facets of tenderness and brutality the material held for them.* Because we faced reality through the children's senses, their dances, emerging in semi-improvisational, semi-compositional form, were as true to the nature of children in style and contour, as their more usual dances of simple exuberance.

GESTAPO

Phyllis, age 11, contributed an original script, *Gestapo*:

"An English flier grounded in Germany is rescued by an anti-fascist Ger-

BOMBS! the children dance life as THEY see it

man woman. The Gestapo, who finds them, throws them into a concentration camp, and tries in vain to get information from the German woman, even torturing the flier before her eyes. The dance ends with the woman defiantly refusing to be intimidated. Moral: not even torture can compel assistance to the Nazis."

We used an old piece of wooden partition for the "concentration camp", and percussion for accompaniment. In this particular dance, the children never wanted to change roles with each other, because each of them found such tremendous satisfaction for *personal* needs, in the parts they originally chose.

PEARL HARBOR

Pearl Harbor, (1943), created by Monita, and Rena Gluck, both nine years, was a duet in three parts: *Planting Rice, The Bombs Fall,* and—*You Will Pay For This*—as Monita listens to the silenced heart beat of her coworker. The trio Gestapo was heroic, the duet *Pearl Harbor* utterly poignant.

One of the ballets employed fantasy to sharpen the children's awareness of the world in which they lived: "The Dragon Meets the People" (1941), centered around the symbolic figure of the three headed monster of fascism.

TOWER OF VICTORY

Since adolescent dances almost always concern themselves with love, in *Tower of Victory,* (1944), we used a love theme as the base:

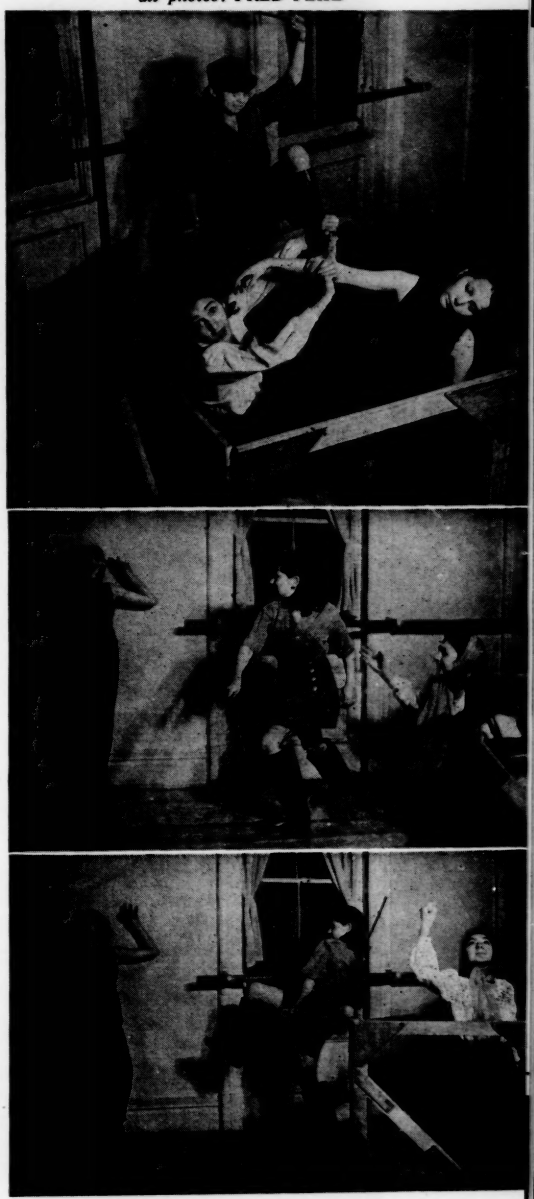
"A European peasant boy and girl are being feted at their wedding ceremony, when the Nazis raid their town. The ballet develops along the lines of the cruel domination of the invaders, and the determination of the villagers, whose shrewdness and courage effect their liberation. There follows the intense communal reconstruction of their town, the search for the lost ones, the beautiful reunion of the lovers, with the wedding celebration completed at the end".

The plot gave plenty of scope to the creators for their innermost, and seemingly contradictory emotional needs. For instance, some of the girls asked for several parts, switching from the cruel Nazis to the courageous villagers. The children suggested and developed characters and scenes: the very restrained comic drunk episode of two Nazi guardsmen; and the woman who turns spy out of personal revenge for the loss of her husband in battle. The dance, *Return to Life,* succeeding the Battle, was an exquisite sensitive dance, the search for each other, and the slow awareness of sun and the imperishable effort to live. I shall never forget Iris, (the storm trooper of two years previous), as she wandered around, slowly touching walls, and lovingly lifting imagined objects from the earth, as she danced the character she created — a woman turned gently mad with grief. There were also Cecile's charming *A Child Dances,* and Rena's intense study, *Strength.* And one of the most touching dances I have ever seen, by the eight year olds, *The Children Will Never Forget.* I contributed simple choreographic forms to bind the whole together, as in *Building of the Tower* that marked the victory of the villagers. In the main, the children's movements were their own, and they danced as personality, age, and understanding demanded. We bought no costumes, and we performed the ballet at an informal afternoon for the parents. It had eleven dances, and ran for forty consecutive minutes.

ON FREEDOM ROAD

On Freedom Road, (1945), was a sequence of dances by a group of twelve and thirteen year olds. It was based on three episodes in American history: the closing in of the American Indian, emancipation of the Negro slave, and allies of world war II. When these

all photos: FRED FEHL



In these dances related to WAR, the children chose their own parts. Through identification with social content, they found tremendous outlet for their own personality needs. In GESTAPO, highly imaginative Iris (age 10), chose the part of the brutal Nazi storm trooper. Neatrice (age 9) shy and sensitive, developed the role of the tortured captive, while Phyllis (age 11) who originated the plot, took the part of the valient woman.

Adolescents always dance of love. Simple forms were used to bind the whole together, as in "building the tower". (Four scenes from the TOWER OF VICTORY.)

adolescent girls danced history, they were also dancing personal feelings of bondage and freedom. Their conflicts between their need to be free, and their lingering dependence on the parent, found, unbeknown to their conscious selves, satisfying outlet in the dances of the Auction Sale of Slaves, and the Emancipation Dance to Lincoln's Proclamation. On the other hand, their identification deepened their understanding of the social content of this ballet. We used source material like Howard Fast's pro-American-Indian book, and excerpts from Lincoln's inspired speeches. We used authentic American Indian music, recorded on location, and bought some basic material at eight cents a yard, which Marion, one of the group, painted in striking Indian designs. We danced to Negro Spirituals, and to the indigenous folk music of our allies: of the Soviet Union and of England. The three periods of history were bound thematically by the struggle for freedom.

COAL (1942)

One of the finest realistic ballets the children ever danced was the *Story of Coal*: "deep under the ground, where the miners work in pits . . ." The booklet we used as source material contained what to us was surprising information, and demonstrated again, how close to the child's world, material of social content can be: For instance, ". . . a canary is part of the equipment of every mine. When there is danger, the little bird is overcome by the gas long before the men even become aware of it—and so the warning is given." Who would ever dream of canaries in coal mines?

* * *

Fairy tales? They are wonderful—but let the child dance them after she has a footing in reality—not before, when the footing may be so insecure that she will find she has slipped from the turret of her fancies only to crash to the hard pavements of our modern world. The child's world of fantasy today includes bombs as well as butterflies. The tensions that result can find release in creativity that does not turn from, but rather faces this fact. This does not lessen the child's joy, — rather clears the blocks for joy to come through.

Even the most stark material of the adult world today is common knowledge among children and this material contains wide scope for identification. The use of this material in the creative dance class, where the child can involve her body in the turbulent rhythms of *our* times, helps to form a positive bond between the child's and the adult's world. Also — and this is no mean advantage — it gives the teacher the opportunity to exert positive influence interpreting what otherwise may well remain darkness and fear — or, even worse, what may become to the child a twentieth century acceptance of destructiveness.

TO BE CONTINUED

PEARL PRIMUS in Nigerian village, Ude district, learns native ritual dance, "Attilagou" from tribal dancer.

LITTLE FAST FEET

the story of the pilgrimage of PEARL PRIMUS to Africa

by DORIS HERING

DANCERS are charmed people. At least that's what we believed after we heard Pearl Primus' story of her year in Africa. For Miss Primus made a journey that certainly no dancer, and probably few explorers, have made. And she did it virtually alone.

It was the kind of trip that all ethnic dancers dream of — an opportunity to reach the very source of her art. Yet, how many dancers, if given the opportunity, would have accepted as Miss Primus did? For it meant disbanding her company and leaving a flourishing career in concert, night clubs, and on Broadway.

And perhaps if she had known the hardships that lay ahead of her, not even Miss Primus would have gone. In fact, there were times during her first weeks in Africa that she probably wished she had never met the wonderful man who made her trip possible.

The man in question was the late Dr. Edward Embrie of the Rosenwald Foundation. He happened to be in the audience when Miss Primus and her company performed at Fiske University in April, 1948, and he was so entranced with Miss Primus' ceremonial dances that he could hardly wait to ask her about them. When he learned that she had never been to Africa, but had pieced her dances together through research, he asked her how she would like to visit Africa.

Almost before Miss Primus had a chance to formulate an uncertain "yes," Dr. Embrie called together the disband-

Watusi warrior in spear dance.

Procession of the royal wives of Bope Nabinshi Nyimi Bushongo (Chosen King of the Bushongo (Bakuba tribe) people.) Their ceremonial garments are richly woven and embroidered and their bodies dusted with ochre powder for the ceremony.

ed Rosenwald Fellowship Committee, which subsequently gave her its last and largest grant — a sum of $4,000.

By Christmas of that year she was on her way to Africa, armed with a field method (Miss Primus is a graduate anthropologist), a gun, generous quantities of D.D.T., and the usual innoculations. But it didn't take her long to discover that a small knife for cutting vines was more useful than the gun; the D.D.T. was unnecessary; there were plenty of ailments beyond the bounds of innoculation; and the best field method was to approach the native villages with honesty and love, instead of gifts and bribes.

Miss Primus's trip began at the Gold Coast and included Angola, Cameroons, Liberia, Senegal, and the Belgian Congo. Each time she arrived at a new city, she secured a boy (they are called "boys" regardless of their age) to act as guide and interpreter. After establishing contact with the white authorities and unsnarling huge quantities of red tape, she would set off into the hills.

The farther away from cities she journeyed, the purer were the dances. For on the coast and in the more urban areas, the native dance has lost its dignity through contamination by jitterbugging and certain unfortunate commercial influences. And at the mission schools the black youngsters are led through the intricacies of the minuet and Flemish folk dances.

But up in the jungle where there is peace and rest and time to feel, the native dance can be found clothed in its age-old beauty and virility. And it retains its original function, one that is very close to the spiritual and practical life of the people.

As Miss Primus made her rounds of the native villages, she soon discovered that each village knew she was coming before she arrived. The deep voiced talking drums of one village would call to the next saying that "Little Fast Feet" was on her way. They called her by this unusual name because, unlike the native women, she wore no heavy bracelets around her ankles and could, therefore, travel much faster.

When Miss Primus arrived at a new village, she immediately explained that she came from a faraway country and that she wished to see their arts and particularly their dances so that she could tell her people about them. But despite this utter simplicity, her native hosts usually considered her an ancestral spirit returned to them in human form. And when they saw her dance, there were even more convinced of the accuracy of their identification.

Sometimes they asked Miss Primus to dance for them; sometimes they performed for her; and many times all danced together as though they had never been separated by hundreds of years of western culture and thousands of miles of land and sea. As the ceremonies went far into the night, the little American girl could feel her identity with her African people growing deeper and stronger, and she knew that when she returned to America, she would dance as never before.

When Miss Primus performed for her jungle friends, she did both tribal and modern dances — all to the sound of the drums. She found that the drummers were amazingly quick at catching rhythmic subtleties, and the audiences encircling her were attentive and eager to add some of her steps to their repertoire.

They taught her their own dances in a way that would be the envy of any dancing school right here in our own country. First they explained the meaning of the dance. Then she was obliged to learn by imitation. If she had difficulty ascertaining exactly which muscles to move, a native dancer would hold her body against his or her own so she could literally absorb the movement.

Contrary to popular misconception, the dance styles of the African tribes vary greatly. For example, the handsome seven foot Watusi warriors are quite theatrical. They wear tall plumed

headdresses and prefer heroic dances like the one in which they express all the traits of their king — his beauty, humility, courage, etc.

The Yurobo people are intense and dramatic. The Fanga of Liberia is a staccato, ecstatic dance. The Bakuba women are sustained and regal. And the Bonny people of Nigeria, because they live near the sea, perform dances that are lyric and expressive of the rolling serenity of the water.

But even in the remote jungle villages current-day trends are having their effect. The war dances are dropping into disuse because the tribes no longer have occasion to make war upon each other. The dances of welcome are, on the other hand, increasing in popularity. The funeral dances are beginning to fade out, but the marriage, fertility, and ecstatic dances are still in excellent condition, with the priests and priestesses especially brilliant as soloists.

Although dancers are still honored members of the communities, they cannot in most cases devote as much time to their art as in former years. For they are obliged, like most of the natives, to travel to the large cities to work, and they can return home only on feast days to perform in the ceremonies.

We were curious about whether or not Miss Primus's journey had affected her opinions of the material she had been performing prior to her departure. She found it accurate, but in some cases incomplete. For example, when the Eusobo people saw her Trinidadian ritual called SHOUTERS OF SOBO, they called the whole tribe together to teach her the dance beginning to end.

And even where the changes weren't specific, her concepts were deepened and intensified. She also gained a broader view of the function of costuming, for among the natives, when a dance accentuates a certain part of the body, the costume is designed to do the same thing. Sometimes that part is left bare. Sometimes it is covered with a shiny paint. Often the costume carries out the subject matter of the dance. For example, she saw a dance of death in which the body was used in a cradle movement (in primitive religions one must die to be reborn) and the costume was wide and cradle-like, too.

When Miss Primus originally created her solo, A NEGRO SPEAKS OF RIVERS, she had in mind the Mississippi River. But when she saw the Niger and Congo Rivers, she understood her own dance for the first time. As she watched the Congo turn brown, silver, and gold; as she saw how it rushed or meandered; as she heard it roar, she understood how it represented civilization. And she felt the role that rivers play in human destiny.

She realized, too, that Africa with its milky morning fogs and cruel daytime sun, with its gentle and generous black peoples, with its lush jungles dotted with brilliant butterflies, had shaped her life and her art as nothing else ever could or would.

Since her return on Christmas, 1949, Miss Primus has been engaged in a breathtaking round of activity which includes studying for her Doctorate in Anthropology at Columbia University, writing three books more or less simultaneously, giving lecture demonstrations, and organizing her African dance material for concert presentation here and abroad next Fall. But she goes through it all with a strangely peaceful air, which she explains by saying, "My body has returned to America, but my soul hasn't yet caught up with it. It's still in the quiet of the jungle."

Women of Benin (Nigeria) in age-old African dance which closely resembles in form those austere and highly disciplined dances of Indonesia. This dance of the women of Benin is never transmitted to other tribes and if the tribe should die out, and these women die, the dance dies with them. The only outlander who was ever given the privilege of learning their dance is Pearl Primus.

Watusi warrior in preparation for the dance. The African tribesman approaches the dance with a reverence and devotion that approaches the mystic. The nearly trancelike state is highly evident in the aspect of this warrior who is endeavouring to disrobe his mind of the "earthly" and to assume the "kingly" when he dances.

Fragments of fresco from Cnossos, showing actual performance of dancer (a woman), dancing before the sacred bulls. Except for jewelled girdle and other ornaments, and sandals on her feet, she is nude. Circa 1400-1500 B.C.

the dance of antiquity:

MINOA

by

Henry S. Noerdlinger

The dance of Minoa, common to the island of Crete, the land of the Philistines and nearby Mediterranean cultures, circa 1500 *B. C. as revealed in seals. The figures shown are all engaged in processions of a religious or secular nature and in actual dance.*

The frieze of figurines which line these pages are actual and authentic figures taken from Minoan seals excavated at Cnossos. Many of the figures are in undoubted dance movement.

Editor's Foreword:

Henry S. Noerdlinger, author of the accompanying commentary on the antique dances of the Mediterranean civilization, circa 1200-1500 *B.C. contemporaneous with the period of Samson in biblical chronology, is a scholar and research artist who became involved and interested in this rich and absorbing study during his association with cinema producer, Cecil B. DeMille, when the latter was making the film,* SAMSON AND DELILAH. *Mr. Noerdlinger's facts are well authenticated and based upon devoted interest and study of the subject.*

HAD it not been for my connection with Cecil B. de Mille and his picture *Samson and Delilah,* I might never have become so fascinated by the Mediterranean island of Crete. In our attempt to establish whence the Philistines came, what culture was theirs, how they dressed, research brought us in contact with a civilization which had its start in Crete two thousand years before the birth of Christ. For more than fifty years archeologists have dug out of the Cretan earth palaces and potsherds, statutary and seals, paintings and pottery. They brought forth factual information on the Minoan civilization, a culture little known among lay people, yet so outstanding in its importance and consequences that the eminent English scholar, the late Sir Arthur Evans, called it "the cradle of European civilization."

But you are interested in the art of dancing, and of dancing we shall speak.

On signet rings of gold, on seals of semi-precious stones, on ivory carvings, and on frescoes, the inspired artists of four thousand years ago depicted their contemporaries in action. Some of these scenes from a remote past can be unmistakably interpreted as dance-scenes.

Here is a seal on which a Minoan woman expresses her feeling in a pose, which might be that of a Javanese temple-dancer. There is a group of three who form a chain to dance around the lyre-playing musician sitting in the center, a couple of doves at her feet. A leader, whose pose is different from that of two temple-dancers who follow her, dances before a priestess or divinity, who, by a graceful inclination of the head, receives their adoration. We cannot miss the exuberance of the woman carved on a signet ring, who, holding

(*Continued on page* 34)

1200 B.C. A woman of Cnossos holding small ivory casket—from a reconstructed fresco made at Tiryns. The bare midriff and divided skirt (pantaloons) were not uncommon.

executed by DOUG ANDERSON

that grand institution: the

EDITOR'S FOREWORD:
Much opinion and millions of words have been spun about the subject of the annual dance recital, but seldom does an author come forth with as sensible, entertaining and useful a summing of the dance recital's ubiquitous difficulties and possibilities as does Miss Schwarz in the present article.

JOSEPHINE SCHWARZ, a Dayton, Ohio dance teacher, with twenty years of practical experience in teaching, and for some years a professional dancer and member of the original Humphrey-Weidman Company has a great deal to offer to the teacher willing to read and learn.

The present article is respectfully offered as an example of the best material on this subject to have reached this editor's desk in many years.

IN TWO PARTS

Part 1

PROLOGUE

Tender May. Sweet June. Recital time.

Your nights are filled with dreams of children eating handfuls of silver glass tinsel, while standing in a drenching rain in new white tutus, or yourself dashing across the stage thinking the curtains are closed, only to find them open, and yourself stark naked. Sleepless nights. Dark circles under your eyes. That dragged-down feeling. That never, never again feeling. But never, never. Last minute headdresses to make. Scenery to be finished. Program to proofread. That awful business of ticket sale.

Your hands reach for what's left of your hair. You start that old habit of pulling on your earlobe. No matter, the lobe is already trailing on your shoulder. Those sweet clusters of adorable children have turned into hordes of little brats that won't remember.

Ragged nerves. Exhaustion from the tight control you place on your disposition.

Tender May. Sweet June. Rot.

It's recital time and there is nothing tender or sweet about it.

But let's go back to January. In January when you began to think about the recital, life was sweet. You were in love with your job; you adored your youngsters; the future looked rosy; you had good ideas and wonderful plans. This year, you resolved, the recital was going to be better than ever before. But it wasn't.

Everything that could go wrong, did. You make excuses to yourself. You are a teacher of dance, not a producer-director of shows. True. But come recital time you unfortunately have to be both. Since your reputation as a teacher depends upon a good recital let's see what can be done to make the next one a really good show. Let's see what can be done to make it not only better but smoother than ever.

THE THEME

A Dance recital can be a warm, charming show that the children will love doing, the audience will enjoy watching and you will take pleasure in producing. Let's make it a dance drama or a ballet, *NOT* a revue. It is easier to have a story to hold the whole thing together, no matter how flimsy a tale. You might write a short story to fit your own particular needs, but, if possible, it is best to use some well-known tale. Children like to dance something they know and people like to see something about which they have heard: A fairy store, for instance.

There are literally thousands of fairy tales. Since they *are* fairy stories, you may take liberties with them and adapt them to your purpose. There are many versions of HANSEL AND GRETEL. The Grimm brothers wrote the original, Mr. Humperdinck added his own touches for the opera, translators and editors have had their way with others. You can do the same with your chosen story.

Your choice of a story will depend on the number of children you are to present, the type of dancing you teach and the stage upon which you will present the finished production. You can make your adaptation elaborate or simple, as you wish, but do be consistent.

A good way to start is to cut the original story to your essential needs. Pick the characters and scenes which you consider absolutely necessary to your cut version. Write your "book" carefully and in detail, but don't be afraid to make changes once you get into production. Many excellent ideas come from the children. Use their suggestions if you feel they can be worked into the final results without too much trouble.

If you have a school that is exclusively ballet your problems are simple, but there are few such schools. Let us assume that you have ballet, tap and acrobatic dancers to present in one recital. That need not stop you from producing a charming fairy tale, or a story of your own invention.

DEVELOPING THE THEME

If you use good sense and good taste you can mix your tap, ballet and acrobatic in one scene. For instance, crickets play an important role in the story of Thumbelina. There is no reason why butterflies in tutus and toe shoes should not be followed by shiny black crickets in swallow-tailed coats and shorts, tapping their hard little feet upon the ground. If it brings to the audience a tickling giggle and pleasure to the children it will be a successful bit of contrast. You're working in the medium of make-believe where anything goes.

Perhaps the routine you learned in

a whale of a job,

but nothing to be afraid of

says JOSEPHINE SCHWARZ

NNUAL DANCE RECITAL

summer course last year would not fit, but that calls upon your creative ability and you could arrange it, with the help of your pianist, so that it would fit. The children won't object to being crickets either, if they are cutely costumed. In fact, they love it. Should there be a King and Queen, and there usually is in every fairy story, there is no reason why they should not be entertained at one time or another, even though the original story does not mention it. Kings and Queens are entertained by fantastic people. Your little acrobats become tumblers. A handsomely-clad troupe of baton-twirling jugglers would not be amiss. Sprightly court jesters can tap their way in and out of court.

If these groups of tap dancers and acrobats do not find a place in your story, you might plan a prologue, an epilogue, divertissements or entractes for them that are suggestive of, but have no direct bearing on the telling of your tale.

Or you might present a series of little BALLETS IN A NUTSHELL completely divorced from your story, with semi-classic or folk music. In these short dance skits you can simply and quickly tell a story in three to five minutes using those awkward squads or groups of beginners that are hard to fit into a well-planned ballet. This whole situation can be reversed if ballet is your smallest department and you plan to use only tap in your story.

MUSIC AND CHOREOGRAPHY

A fairy story need not become a stumbling block to the choice of a good composer. Of course if you are planning a night club scene (which hardly lends itself to a children's production) it is not advisable to use Brahms, but there is Gershwin, Kern, etc. Paul Draper, however, dances to the classics and Fred Astaire would not be stopped by a bit of Chopin. As a matter of fact, if your pianist is good, she can arrange classic music for any tap routine if it suits your purpose. It is done every day. Your court jesters can tap their way in and out to a Shubert march as well as to Stars and Stripes Forever.

It is best to limit yourself to one or two composers, if possible, and choose good ones. Beethoven did not just produce two thick books of piano sonatas and nine symphonies. He wrote many charming short pieces which are very danceable. A little research into the compositions of the great composers will delight you. The music of one or two composers eliminates a hodgepodge musical accompaniment. For one thing your pianist will be delighted, for another your audience will be happier, especially if some have sensitive, music-loving ears, and you will find choreography easier with better final results under the influences of good music. If you are in the habit of giving composers mention on your program a famous name will lend prestige to your production.

THUMBELINA
by
Hans Christian Anderson
Adapted and choreographed by Jane Doe
Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Joseph Hayden

Your pianist may take a poet's license with the music, as long as it is in good taste, viz. cuts, liberties with tempo, etc. She can arrange it to suit your needs and you won't get half as tired of a good composer after weeks of rehearsing.

The art of performing is a special skill in itself. Even the most experienced troupers are under a strain on first nights. Remember that when you choreograph dances for your children and treat your recital as a first night. Allow for the nervous strain and plan your choreography far beneath the actual technical skill of the performers. If a dancer can do 16 fouettes in the studio give her only eight to do in performance. She is bound to approach the eight with ease, knowing that she can do 16. This will keep tension down to a minimum. A person appearing in one or two performances has little or no chance to redeem herself in the eyes of the audience if she muffs her one and only big performance a season.

Keep exits and entrances as uncomplicated and few as possible. Families love to feast their eyes on their darlings during performance. A dance may last but 2 or 3 minutes. However, if the children are given definite spots to stand, sit or pose on stage before or after their number Mama, Papa and Aunt Mehitable get ample opportunity for the 'feast' and you have a less complicated problem in the wings or backstage.

Avoid vertical lines. They are seldom effective unless seen from a balcony and are desperately hard for nonprofessionals to maintain. Horizontal lines are most effective but become quite boring if dance after dance is performed thusly. A good level-headed youngster can lead a line in pleasing patterns dancing into circles, squares, diagonals and ending in a pose or straight line for the end.

Two scenes from ballets given by the Dayton Ballet Company under the direction of the author, Miss Josephine Schwarz.

Top—
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY: The scene is the hall of the castle on the 15th birthday of the Princess. Princess pulls aside drapery revealing old woman spinning (the wicked Fairy Carabosse in disguise). The Princess pricks her finger on the spindle and falls into enchanted sleep to last one hundred years.

Below—
HANSEL AND GRETEL: Hansel sprinkles the crumbs as the two children start off for the forest.

photos by Elva B. Slack

If the groups are very large it is wise to have only ½ or ⅓ of them active at a time. The other ⅓ or ⅔ can pose engagingly in the background, clap hands or tap feet, do a simple port de bras or an accompanying rhythmic movement such as swaying, isolated head, arm or foot gestures.

Give some good thought to your floor patterns. Just as you would not have four waltz clogs performed one after the other (unless for *good* reason) or four dances costumed in pink follow one another, so it is wise to see that four line dances or four circle dances do not follow each other. Your audience will probably be unaware of the careful thought which goes into your choreography but they will find pleasure in interesting patterns in your dances just as they find pleasure in catchy tunes in your music.

CASTING

In casting your groups you use them in the parts their height, not their degree of excellence, suggests. Small flowers and big trees, little fairies and large peasants. Fairies may do nothing more than skip in circles and fly with their arms or they may dance one of the most technical bits of your whole production; but, if the fairies are bigger than the trees in the wood in which they are dancing, your hard work is lost by ridiculous contrast. The groups are easy. It's casting leads which makes you reach for the aspirin. Ideally, you pick your best dancers for leading roles, with an eye to their adaptability to the part they are to portray, and that is that. But it is never so simple.

Leave your ear alone, no sense in jerking it any further down your neck. You'll want to wear earrings next week. Put the bottle of hair tonic back on the shelf. Let's be sensible. No matter how hard you try you can't please everyone. You want a good show first of all and casting correctly is vitally important. There are ways of dealing with last year's leads, precedent, politics and worst of all horrors, jealous mothers.

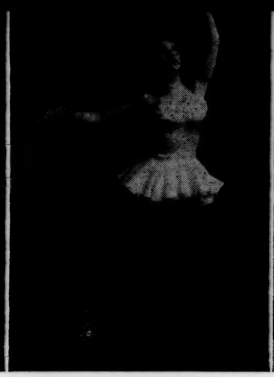
A story like THE TWELVE DANCING PRINCESSES offers one solution. Twelve leads with twelve princes as second leads . . . If your story is Thumbelina you have a fine excuse to choose the TINIEST tyke in the school, no matter how she dances. In fact she need not dance at all. She need only be carried about from tulip to nut shell to lily pad looking adorable and sweet and waving her arms from time to time. Rapunzel would naturally be the LONGEST-HAIRED child in the school. If she is not one of the best dancers, she need do no more than hang her head out of a tower window from time to time and finally dance off with the prince. But if there is nothing so identifying in your leading characters as size and length of hair there is always the DARK HORSE. Let those advanced students who are jealous as cats of one another's recital roles, spit, scratch and meow. Pull a fast one on them. Dig up some little beginners for leads who look the part and have some acting ability and let the action of the story swing around them without having them do any outstanding dancing.

Perhaps your school is big: with, let us say, 250 students. Every one of them needs must be in the recital. Of course, but what audience wants to sit through 250 amateur dancers doing their stuff?

(*Continued on page* 39)

Winner MARY HOOD
Cornelia, Ga.

Winner DELORES LORING
Honolulu, T. H.

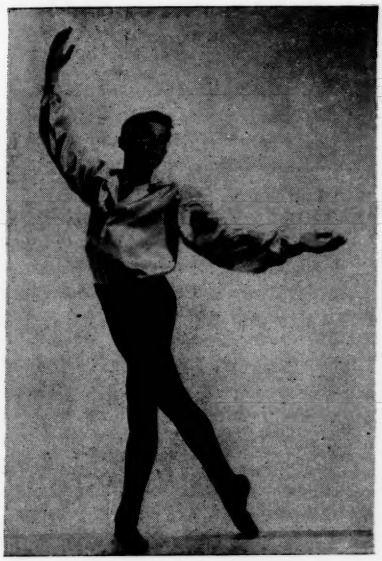


Winner BEATRICE GOLDNER, Sunnyside, N. Y.

Winner CECILY KELLY
Dublin, Eire

Winner SOPHIE MARTIN
Asheville, N. C.

Grand Winner



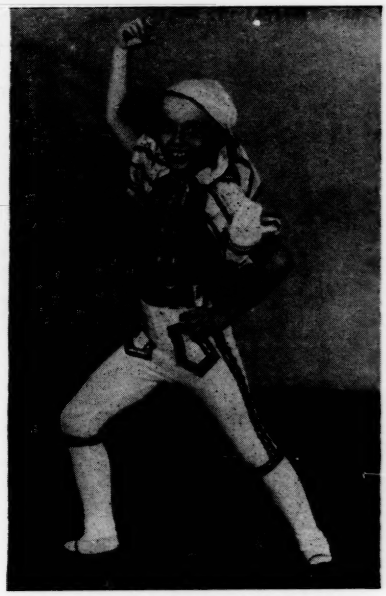
CONRAD LUDLOW
San Francisco, Calif.

NOTE: The Editors regret their failure to print the photo of the twelfth winner, Miss Barbara Dias, of Los Angeles, Calif. as Miss Dias could not meet the deadline for publication of winners' photos.

The Young Dancer takes pleasure and pride in introducing the winners of the Young Dancer contest:

"WHAT DANCING MEANS TO ME"

Grand Winner



RONNIE SCHWINN
Dayton, Ohio

HONORABLE MENTION Winners to appear in August issue

Because of the overwhelming response from young dancers everywhere, and in consideration of the fact that many writers in the contest "WHAT DANCING MEANS TO ME" were greatly deserving of honorable mention, ten names will be printed in the August issue, together with a brief excerpt from each letter.

YOU may be among these. Do not fail to see the YOUNG DANCER for August.

Winner LANIER ANDERSON
Louisville, Ky.

Winner JUDITH WESTON
Bristol, Tenn.

Winner LYDIA FEDIAI
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"DANCEFORMATION" . . . . a quiz for younger and older dancers

What is YOUR Dance I. Q.?

If you don't know — here's HOW TO FIND OUT . . . and we don't mind letting you in on a little secret: you'll know the answers to these and others to come, if you read your DANCE MAGAZINE regularly. HERE GOES!

QUIZ
For Age Group 6-11

(If you've read the whole issue through, you'll KNOW the answers!)

Some of you will find these hard to answer. Maybe they are just a little too advanced? Good! That's to make you try harder. And SOME of you are so smart (or you wouldn't be way ahead of us) that you know ALL the answers. For you we recommend the quiz for the older age group.

1. Who is the man, now near his semi-centennial year as a dancer, who is popularly called the Father of American Dance? (This one is elementary, kids, and required for passing any quiz on dance.)
2. What did the primitive tribesmen of Africa call Pearl Primus when they saw her and who did they think she was?
3. Isadora Duncan was instantly hailed as the liberator of dance in her native America when she first emerged in the 1890's as a barefoot dancer. Is this true or false?
4. In what country was the male dancer in ballet really restored to his presently important place in ballet, and by whose influence?
5. In what place in ancient times did boys and girls dance before savage bulls, held as sacred by them and worshipped as gods?
6. Who is the author of a method for recording steps of dance which resembles a musical score, and where did he live, and when?

LOOK FOR A SURPRISE, young dancers, in next month's YOUNG DANCER section.

QUIZ
For Age Group 12-16 (and over)

1. At Carnegie Hall (which once barred Isadora Duncan because her tunic was too short) this dancer cooled off last summer during a hot spell by dancing in the semi-nude: (a) Harriette Anne Gray; (b) Thelma Johnson Streat; (c) Dorathi Bock Pierre; (d) Gypsy Rose Lee.
2. If you remember your Miss Hush (and why don't you?), to you every soul is a: (a) Weeping Willow; (b) Firecracker; (c) Circus; (d) Lamentation.
3. When you think of Hadassah, you think of: (a) Broadway Rose; (b) Broadway Lullaby; (c) Broadway Bounce; (d) Broadway Hindu.
4. She became an apprentice voodoo priestess while dance researching in Haiti: (a) Maya Deren; (b) Katherine Dunham; (c) Josephine Premice; (d) Hattie McDaniels.
5. She was one of the principals of "The Black Crook" in 1866, and she gave Ruth St. Denis her first ballet lesson. Surely you remember: (a) Fanny Elssler; (b) Marie Taglioni; (c) Loie Fuller; (d) Marie Bonfanti.
6. Rochester's ex-vaudeville dancing partner provided New York's most brilliant concert debut of recent years. She was: (a) Mary Bruce; (b) Janet Collins; (c) Syvilla Fort; (d) Kitty Murray.
7. Which famous dancer once competed in a six-day bicycle race at Madison Square Garden? (a) Eugene Loring; (b) Jack Cole; (c) Ruth St. Denis; (d) Alicia Markova.
8. Who was Ignacio Sanchez Mejias? (a) Rita Hayworth's grandfather; (b) Composer of a Cuadro Flamenco; (c) a bullfighter; (d) a Spanish dancer.

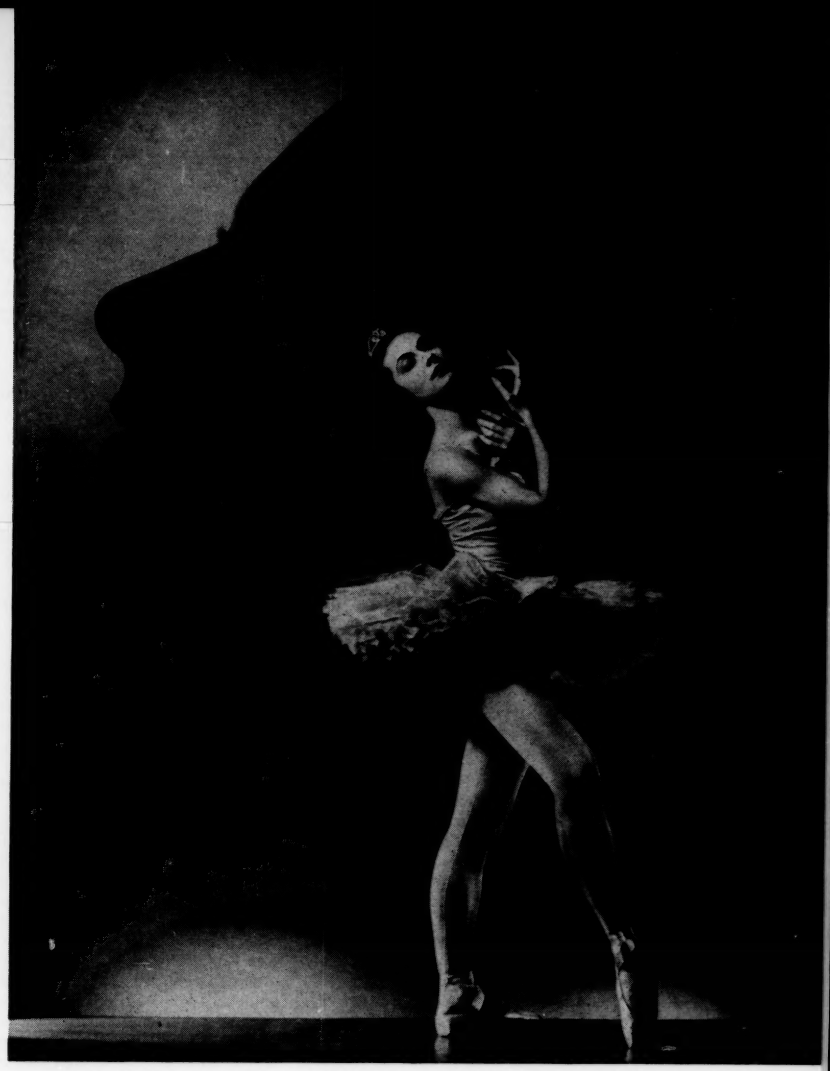
SOLUTIONS appear on page 33

CARTOON of the MONTH

profile of the month

MARY ELLEN MOYLAN

by WALTER E. OWEN



MARY ELLEN MOYLAN, the ballerina of 1950 *photo: Walter E. Owen*

Mary Ellen Moylan, age 11, practising in the garden of her home, St. Petersburgh, Fla.

HAILED as the "Irish Colleen of the Ballet" and other fancy-sounding newspaper headlines, Mary Ellen Moylan is the youngest ballerina (verging on twenty-four) in the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, a very ambitious and hard-working ballerina. Her mind is fixed on a single goal: the "top of the heap".

A true career woman, Mary Ellen works hard, studies the nuances of each role and polishes and deepens her interpretations, but is never satisfied. She never takes on too many new roles in one season as she feels one or two are worth concentration, but too many would dissipate her talent and strength.

Of Irish parentage and descent, Mary Ellen was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, and grew up in Florida, where she had her early dance training. She was brought to New York in 1940 to continue her studies and enrolled at the School of American Ballet, studying as a scholarship pupil with Muriel Stuart, Oboukhoff and Balanchine. Her advancement was steady and in 1942 she became ballerina of the New Opera Company production of ROSALINDA, for which Balanchine was creating the ballets. During the run of this operetta, another New Opera production, LA VIE PARISIENNE, opened across the street and a short ballet being needed to fill out the evening, BALLET IMPERIAL, which the American Ballet had performed on its South American tour, was introduced with Mary Ellen in the lead role. She spent the run of the two shows dashing madly between theatres to meet cues in both. Her performances received the highest critical acclaim.

Today BALLET IMPERIAL is probably the most brilliant, "pure" ballet in the

(*Continued on page* 37)

drawings executed by DOUG ANDERSON

the neglected MALE

The Neglected Male — Year 1850.

Part VI in the series
BALLET — the Universal Language

by Selma Jeanne Cohen

faculty member, American School of Dance, Hollywood, Calif., Eugene Loring, director.

THE modern boy usually has to be dragged, forcefully, to a dancing class. Tap? "Well, o.k." But ballet? "That's just for girls!"

Yet there was a time when ballet was "for men only." In the seventeenth century court ballets the male dancer predominated, even assuming many of the feminine parts. Women did not dance professionally till 1681, and even for some time after that date the big names in ballet were all men: Lully, L'Etang, Pécourt, Beauchamps, Blondy, Ballon. All were praised for the qualities of nobility, precision, grace, and lightness. Women, when they were mentioned, were most often referred to as partners of prominent men. Even after the emergence of famous women dancers, like Sallé and Camargo, Gaetan Vestris was the idol of the French public and once apologized to a woman who had stepped on his toe by saying: "Madam, you have not hurt ME, you have put Paris into mourning for a fortnight." His son, Auguste, known as the "god of dance," inspired a mock-heroic poem *The Vestriad*. Written in 1819 by Hans Busk, the poem described the gods of Olympus as jealous of Vestris whom Venus had taught "what masters here but rarely teach—how heels may caper till the heart they reach."

But the advent of romanticism, of pointes, and of Taglioni was to banish men from the reigning position in ballet. *La Sylphide* was the rage of Paris and soon of the whole of Europe. Taglioni's triumphs stirred other women to compete with her, and it was not long before Elssler, Grahm, Grisi, and Cerito were vying for the spotlight. With so much attention centered on the feminine contingent, audiences found little time to notice male dancers. Besides, men had discovered no new technical feats like the dance on pointes to arouse attention. So we find Gautier writing of *La Sylphide* in 1838 that "there are hardly any dances for men which is a comfort." To Gautier a dancer had a right to exist only if she were pretty. And men? Who wants to look at a red neck and muscular arms?

The male dancer now found himself a mere porteur, a handy person to have around for lifting and showing off the ballerina. But he did not dance. In some cases men's parts were danced by women—a complete reversal of the seventeenth century situation. Fanny Elssler, for instance, "after having played her role, asked her lover to be seated and began to dance with her tall sister, arrived from God knows where, as if she had dropped from the skies."

So the ballerina flourished. As ballet developed in Russia in the later nineteenth century, men had little chance to stage a comeback, for the main choreographer, Petipa, was as notoriously bad a composer for men as he was an excellent one for women. He would watch Johannsen's classes to get ideas for men's dances but he preferred to concentrate on the feminine parts. Consequently his ballets, like *Swan Lake*, provide no more ample opportunities for the male technician than does *Giselle*.

The reforms of Fokine started the revival of masculine dance. By his attacks on the excessive use of pointes and on the abuse of virtuoso steps (almost invariably allotted to women) Fokine made way for the return of the male dancer. His *Prince Igor* was among the first of the new ballets to exploit a genre revealing the most masculine elements in ballet. When Fokine's creations were executed by artists like Nijinsky, the male dancer was reinstated in his rightful stature.

Since then other factors have combined to raise the prestige of the masculine dance. Alliances of good choreographers and good men dancers have continued. In addition, as the subject matter of ballet became broader, the exclusive hold of the fairy tale plot being relaxed, roles demanding strong male dancers came into being. A Prince Charming needed only to look handsome, but a Billy the Kid has to dance. Today, masculine roles in ballet call for characterization which the feminine body and mode of movement cannot adequately interpret.

A further impetus came from a different form of dance. Musical comedies began contributing to the revival even before true ballets were incorporated in them. The popularity of tap dancers, like Paul Draper and Fred Astaire, was a fact before audiences realized that their styles depended heavily on balletic elements. When these elements were recognized, the possibilities of ballet as a masculine form of dance were acknowledged.

(*Continued on page* 33)

The Neglected (?) Male — Year 1950.

the neglected male

(*Continued from page* 32)

The masculine dance has its own province, qualities which are peculiar to it alone. The man's vigor and strength are virtues in their own right, while they also complement the woman's delicacy and grace. The man's range is a broad one, varying from the tenderness of *Lilac Garden* to the boisterousness of *Fancy Free*. The male dancer of today plays no subordinate role; he has a character of his own and he dances to express it. Choreographers have learned to take advantage of the man's physique by composing for, him roles that women cannot dance. Particular steps in the ballet vocabulary; tours en l'air a la seconde, much of the grand batterie, are reserved almost exclusively for men. The nineteenth century setback was bound to be temporary, for it was contrary to nature. Throughout its previous history dance, whether as a spontaneous expression of community life or as the formal pastime of the court, had been for men and women alike. Without this dual nature, masculine and feminine, ballet would be incomplete as an art form.

There was a time when ballet was "just for girls." But that time has long since passed.

TO BE CONTINUED

SOLUTION

to quiz — age group 6-11

1. Ted Shawn, a name all young dancers should learn at once, if they don't already know it.
2. The tribesmen thought she was a spirit; they called her Omowale, which means "The Daughter Returns Home".
3. False. Isadora was ignored in her native country. She had to go to Europe to be recognized as the artist and liberator of dance that she was.
4. It was not until the visit of Isadora Duncan to Russia in 1905, and the effect of her influence on the already revolutionary Michael Fokine, the important choreographer of his time, that we began to see the restoration of the male dancer to his rightly deserved prestige and place in ballet.
5. It was the Minoan civilization in Crete, roughly 1300 B.C., (an island in the Mediterranean) where dances and processions were held before bulls, a spectacle which has survived, although in vastly different shape, down to our own times, in the form of the corridas (bullfights) seen in Spain and Latin American countries.
6. Vladimir I. Stepanov lived in Russia, born 1866, died 1896. He was only one of a number of inventors of methods to record or notate a ballet or a dance.

SOLUTION

to quiz — age group 12-16

1. (b) Thelma Johnson Streat.
2. (c) Martha Graham's "Every Soul Is a Circus".
3. (d) Her satire, "Broadway Hindu".
4. (a) Maya Deren.
5. (d) Marie Bonfanti.
6. (b) Janet Collins.
7. (c) Ruth St. Denis. She placed sixth.
8. (c) A bullfighter, who died in the 1930's; was immortalized in a poem by the Spanish poet, Garcia Lorca; the poem was the basis of a dance drama created in 1947 by Doris Humphrey.

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the dance of antiquity: MINOA

a flute in her right hand, has jumped into the air, her feet clearly off the ground. The agony it causes him to win his fair lady shows clearly in the contorted pose of a man; while the woman in question is contrasting her position with grace and calm. Nimble tumblers appear as well. While this would normally not be considered as dancing, we shall include them here for a later purpose.

But now we come to a partially restored fresco. The scene is placed in an olive grove, a site possibly reserved for religious services or else for popular entertainment, or both. In any event, a large audience of men and women is sitting or standing in a segregated area identifiable with bleachers. Some of the men are intently watching an event to the left of our picture, which we cannot see; while others, equally interested, look to the right. The ladies are in similar observing poses, except that here and there a couple of them seem to be engaged in personal conversation, a detail that anyone can observe in any one of our present theatres. Evidently it was fashionable even then to be seen at such a social gathering and to show a noticeable disinterest in the purpose of the event. The purpose of our event here, as far as we can observe in the restored part of this fresco, is the performance of a dance. Fourteen women, dressed in their brilliantly colored and elegant costumes, are seen in varied though similar poses. Some have one, others both arms outstretched, or are about to do so. They are advancing from right to left, in two lines, and in an irregular, meandering course. One dancer, however, seems to be in the process of breaking away from the loose formation, since the position of her body indicates that she is moving from left to right. No musicians are in evidence; thus it is entirely possible that a rhythmical melody was provided by the dancers themselves in song.

Since it is connected with a dance performance, it should prove of additional interest here to point out that the exhibition takes place in a clearly marked area, which Sir Arthur Evans named the "theatral area," and which we may be permitted to call a stage. Actually such sites have been uncovered both at Phaestos and Knossos by Evans and other archeologists. They show a specifically constructed rectangular floor, surrounded by steps which served as seats. A special "box" was found at Knossos, and, it is assumed, it was reserved for royalty.

Should fortune enable you to spend some time with the people of Crete today, you would, of course, witness some of their traditional dances. There are those where the tune is supplied by the singing of dancers themselves and others where musical instruments provide melodic rhythms. The instruments are the flute and the Cretan lyre, as well as the bagpipe and the drum, all dating far back into the antiquity of the island. The beats, often the same as in other European folk-dances, nevertheless provide two notable exceptions: those with five and seven beats to the bar. The basic formation of these dances is usually the chain, which, at times, develops into a ring or breaks up into smaller groups. Frequently dances are performed by either men or women alone. The group usually has a leader, whose ability and agility surpass that of his "chorus." Sir Arthur Evans observes that the general motion of the dances he witnessed in Crete is from left to right and that the chain takes a "meandering" course.

Greek mythology tells of a similar "meandering" dance: Theseus, conquerer of the dread Minotaur, led the doomed boys and maidens to freedom. Upon gaining safety he initiated with them the "Crane dance," which in its meandering progress illustrated the mazy passage through the intricate labyrinth they had just completed.

A fine description of such a dance can be found in Alexander Pope's translation of Homer's "The Shield of Achilles." It is worthwhile to quote:

A figured dance succeeds; such once was seen
In lofty Gnossus for the Cretan queen,
Form'd by Daedalean art; a comely band
Of youths and maidens, bounding hand in hand.
The maids in soft simars of linen dress'd;
The youths all graceful in the glossy vest;
Of those the locks in flowery wreaths inroll'd;
Of these the sides adorned with swords of gold,
That glittering gay, from silver belts depend.
Now all at once they rise, at once descend,
With well-taught feet; now shape in oblique ways,
Confusedly regular, the moving maze:
Now forth at once, too swift for sight, they spring,
And undistinguish'd blend the flying ring:
So whirls a wheel, in giddy circle toss'd,
And, rapid as it runs, the single spokes are lost.
The gazing multitudes admire around:
Two active tumblers in the center bound;
Now high, now low, their pliant limbs they blend:
And general songs the sprightly revel end.

Today's "moving maze" of the Cretan dance and the agile tumbling of the leaders is reminiscent of the excerpts quoted above. The acrobatic feats performed by Minoans of both sexes, the dance scenes described in the first part of this article and illustrated in the archeological documentation left behind by their contemporary artists, compare with current Cretan folk dances. We realize that there is more than a mythological tradition here: it is a tradition based on life as it was lived beyond the conscious memory of man.

* * * *

The writer hopes that some imaginative choreographer will create and bring to performance a Minoan ballet. The elegance of the costumes, appealing in their modernity; the brilliance of red, blue, yellow, orange, black, and white, as colors freely used; the excitment of acrobatic ballet contrasted against the calmness of measured steps; the individuality of the leader and even the members of the "chorus" — all these provide not only ample reason, but a wealth of material for such an undertaking.

NICOLAI SERGUEEFF

(*Continued from page* 16)

1910, while Sergueéff and Gorsky continued in both St. Petersburg and Moscow.

With the coming of the war of 1914, Sergueéff left St. Petersburg. In 1917 he went to Saratov, thence by Tiflis to Constantinople, then by ship to Marseilles, arriving in Paris in 1920.

In 1922, when his contract with Diaghilev had expired, Sergueéff went to Riga to establish a company. He produced LA FILLE MAL GARDEE, PAQUITA and act IV of LA BAYADERE at the Opera Theatre in Riga. In 1925 he returned to Paris on the invitation of Spessivstseva, to produce GISELLE, and in 1934 he again produced this ballet for the Camargo Society in London, with Spessivstseva and Dolin appearing as principals.

The various colonial Ballet Russe companies of the thirties were inventing and discarding scores of new works, and the maestro had no further opportunities to put his great knowledge to service. The early Sadler's Wells group of a dozen or so, then united with the Camargo-Rambert group of similar proportions, so that slowly it became possible to produce a company sufficiently large in numbers, far different from the Petersburg artists in training and talent, to perform the classic ballets.

It was then that Sergueéff was invited to produce the classic versions of the standard works, such as SWAN LAKE and COPPELIA, THE SLEEPING BEAUTY, THE NUTCRACKER and GISELLE. He had previously produced GISELLE in Paris, for the Opera, being awarded for this service the medal of the Academie.

Sergueéff had not felt entirely happy about the Diaghilev London 1921 production of SLEEPING BEAUTY, for reason of cuts, alterations and insertions arranged by Diaghilev in collaboration with Stravinsky, who similarly altered Tschaikovsky's music. He is inclined to attribute the eventual failure of the season to these innovations. In somewhat similar fashion he comments on the gradual changes introduced into his originally authentic staging of SLEEPING BEAUTY by the Sadler's Wells Ballet, partly by reason of insufficient dancers to maintain all component characters on the level of the Imperial Russian, and partly by compressions and cuts in the choreographic form.

★

Here we encounter the thorny problem of "what to do with the classics?" We have to remember that they are indeed classics, but of the last century, so that we must ask ourselves honestly whether we shall use them for public display, as well as for training? Diaghilev had to face the same problem, for although at first he was keen on new works, set in the old technical tradition, he could never forget their amazing standards. He was constantly torn between the old world of Petipa and the new world of Paris, whence dates my own experience of ballet.

I have been able to compare these western European revivals with the continuance of the Russian tradition in Leningrad and Moscow, concerning which no full explanation has yet been published, because the western European critics failed to visit Russia when they had the opportunity, while the Russian critics were not allowed to visit western Europe. Without seeing all sides, and seeing all of the major productions, real comparisons are impossible, and when any writer who ventures to say a good word, because here it is a true word, for anything Russian, he is immediately denounced as a communist — then we have to admit that genuine theatre criticism becomes impossible.

Diaghilev himself had more sense; he was continually in contact with Russia, and even got his Prokofieff ballet, PAS D'ACIER from thence in 1927.

★

When the International Ballet company (of England) was founded in 1941 by Mona Inglesby, Sergueéff took the welcome opportunity of producing classical ballets for the

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new group. There was every possible war-time difficulty, the opposite, in every respect, of the comfortable setting of the Imperial court theatres, yet he was still the guardian of the authentic tradition, so that with native Russian persistence he finally managed to give the fruits of the Maryinsky repertory to western Europe.

Sergueéff is the only man in the world today who combines personal experience of the true Russian ballet of the 19th century with possession of the factual records of their greatest classic ballets. His knowledge is fully respected, in fact, the original choreographic form rules all the productions staged by the International Ballet Company.

During the last nine years, Sergueéff has been ballet-master and producer of COPPELIA, SWAN LAKE, GISELLE, THE SLEEPING BEAUTY, and Ivanov's dances from PRINCE IGOR for this company. He and Mme. Sergueéff also teach in the school which is part of the company.

It has taken all that time to produce that working unity, essential for any classical production, in the company. Even dancers of high ability, freshly entering the company, require at least a year's hard work to assimilate the method and to obtain the inimitable style, easy to see, but difficult to secure, that is the tradition of the Russian school, as distinct from the choreographic form of the ballet. Sergueéff unites in a unique manner these two modes, the technical and the artistic forms.

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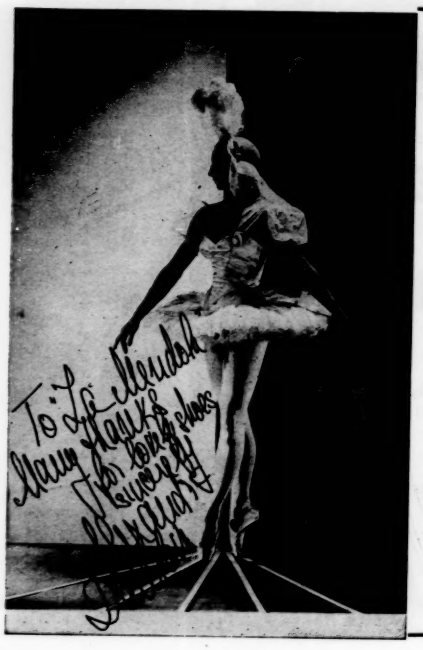

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Alexandra Danilova, Prima Ballerina, Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, prefers La Mendola's special toe shoes . . . because she finds that their precise workmanship definitely aids her superb technique.

Many of us here in England feel that an effort should be made to bring Sergueéff to America with the nucleus of his trained company, with the object of augmenting it with American dancers and American funds — for the purpose of maintaining the tradition, and to stage further works, such as ESMERALDA and DON QUIXOTE, never before seen outside Russia.

America responded with warmth to the Sadler's Wells Ballet in its initial appearance in 1949, and especially the full length works, such as SLEEPING BEAUTY and SWAN LAKE, originally staged for the Sadler's Wells by Sergueéff, found great favour there. It is conceivable that America would immensely favour other great Russian classics, full length works of three and four acts, as staged by Nicolai Sergueéff, but without the considerable alteration attempted by the Sadler's Wells company in their re-staged Russian repertory.

Nicolai Sergueéff, now some 75 years young, has much to offer the western world of the Russian tradition of which he has been guardian and vessel, but whether or not his unique knowledge is to be intelligently exploited, remains for the western world to decide.

★

(*Continued from page* 31)

repertory of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and Mary Ellen Moylan is "the" ballerina associated with this ballet.

Mary Ellen joined the Ballet Russe as soloist in the fall of 1943, dancing leads in SERENADE, SYLPHIDES (the Prelude), SNOW MAIDEN, DANSES CONCERTANTES and others. Her notices were nothing short of colossal. But colossal or not, Mary Ellen felt the urge to try Broadway, so just as she was making a great name in the Russian ballet, she resigned to appear in a musical called THE DAY BEFORE SPRING, for which Anthony Tudor was creating the ballets. Unluckily the dancers were rather buried in this top-heavy musical, but it ran into the Spring of 1946.

In the Fall of the same year she appeared with the newly-formed Ballet Society, dancing leads in THE FOUR TEMPTATIONS and DIVERTIMENTO. In the Spring of 1947 she danced with Frank Moncion in a Broadway production of THE CHOCOLATE SOLDIER, again to the choreography of Mr. Balanchine.

Although this musical was a great success and Mary Ellen's notices were glowing, by this time she had made up her mind where she belonged: in ballet — and so, she returned to Ballet Russe, a welcome prodigal daughter.

Mary Ellen has been continuously with this company for three years and has danced most leading roles in the classical favorites, as well as the character ballets. She loves to "mug" (says she) so SCHEHEREZADE (the Sultana) is a favorite of hers. Her Queen in SWAN LAKE has a lovely, soft quality. Her Myrtha in GISELLE is a study in the imperious and unearthly combined. In recent seasons she has brought much colour to such ballets as CIRQUE DE DEUX, PAQUITA and BIRTHDAY, giving a special "Moylan" quality to each role.

What is really indicated at this time is one or two new, *strong* ballets to keep ahead of her development. Please, Mr. Balanchine!

Mary Ellen's life outside the arena of ballet is simple and happy. A girl with an unostentatious manner, without chi-chi mannerisms, her tastes are extrovert and she has a capacity for pleasure through simple things like reading and walking. In literature her tastes embrace a wide field including poetry, drama, the classics. Readers of this magazine may have noticed in the past occasional clever little line drawings signed "M.E.M." This is our own friend, Mary Ellen. She has a great gift for these unpretentious, humorous drawings and decorates her letters to friends with delightful little sketches.

Of course she has an impish sense of humor, Irish-flavoured and is always springing surprises on her family and friends.

The Irish colleen of ballet sings, swims, knits, bakes, cooks and has a good time in this vale, even is a popular person with her colleagues in the ballet, an assertion which cannot always be made for every ballerina (or can it) and in the end whatever she does all her hobbies, all her work, her efforts and her affairs come inevitably back to the mainstay and chief reason for being: ballet — and the stage. Because no matter what other pursuits Mary Ellen may follow, and follow successfully, it is as ballerina that she is of true significance to our grateful world of dance.

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the triumph of the ego

(*Continued from page* 13)

namely Greece.

To live in Greece and to study the past of the dance as well as antique music, sculpture, painting, and architecture, meant to Isadora to know "the very source of beauty." There her ideas on the dance ripened, her ideals were formed into a philosophy, and her strength for the task of spreading and putting a new dance into action was born. Until then she had meandered, groping for the means to express herself accurately. Living in the classic country with its alabaster blue sky her dance began to shape. It was neither Greek nor Antique, only in the quality that breathed of it, was the dancing the spontaneous expression of her soul uplifted by beauty.

If we view the processes of this period of growth we can readily see that she was trying to learn from the past, as intuition prompted her, and so bring forth the answer to her own ambition. Her absolute need for freedom found nourishment in Greece otherwise. The adoption of the flowing, draped costume, the sandals, and later the bare-foot dancing, were inspired there. This was in keeping with her concept of movement, which was aided by the loosely held costume and which allowed for full attention to the dance. It was the signal to break away from the loaded romantic costume which presented the key to most of the ballet tales. This then was the beginning for a new style of dance costume in the legitimate theatre.

The romanticist era just behind her, Isadora felt a need to promote her own dance with a slogan. That she chose the Greek was partly due to its known classic simplicity, pure form and heroic concept. It gave to the world at large, and to Europe in particular, a chance to label her dancing. It served as a familiar association and permitted her to advance much more undisturbed on paths yet new to audiences. Her main emphasis was on the vital need for a different direction of dance understanding.

Isadora's inspiration for a new dance needed constant nourishment. The people in Europe were ready to conceive her ideas in practical terms and she felt driven to more and more activity because of this demand.

The "harmonious reflection of nature" so much an unspoken part of all art was hailed by Isadora as a necessity and basis of her envisioned dance. It was only natural that European artists welcomed her whole-heartedly. After all, what better messenger for the appreciation of a new form in art could they have had? She was the personification of a true herald, enjoying the responsibility of a challenge. For only those can serve a cause who can speak and who have had an experience from within. All her interpretations carried a message for more freedom and all her movements revealed the glory of a full experience.

Nature inspired her dance compositions, for "man's culture is the making use of forces connected with nature at its roots". Much strength lies in the ancient mysteries and the symbolic past for which Isadora searched with the sole purpose of relating inner basic happenings through the dance. Isadora, more even than a philosopher, was able to install the meaning of all life and to strive for the ultimate expression of a people living in the fullest sense of the word. She studied Plato, Sophocles and Euripides, but also received inspiration from Shakespeare and Whitman; through them her creative mind was spurred on to still higher aims.

The dancer's body, in its natural shape, form, line and curves, is the very instrument for the expression of emotion. Isadora had such an ideal body. Even if her technic was not superb, her motor skill was the result of intensive preparation and she was certainly one of the most able in projecting to her audience whatever she wanted to express.

To that end the Greek medium served only as a frame. In every dance, she danced herself. Many of her admirers, as well as the general public, remember Isadora's dancing thus: " . . . she was a symphony, so abstract, so enchanting, so meaningful . . ." and yet, her dancing seemed strongly related to the spectator's feelings and was also a part of his inner self.

It was Isadora's conviction that the universal force and bond must stem from a common denominator, therefore the motivation for dance must have its source from within. She established as the center of all movement the solar plexus guiding motions from the soul. Her theory, like her technic, appears as if veiled to us, yet if we examine her endeavour, it is perfectly clear that it had a solid foundation.

The search for motivation brought her to basic emotional laws considering joy, sorrow, devotion, and freedom in terms of pantomime. She recognized the dynamic law coordinating the flow of emotional expression in her "wave principle" which emphasizes the gradual accumulation of force. She resorted to line and plasticity and by adhering to a certain amount of repetition, could not fail but demonstrate a new technical approach to dance.

All the theory and technic of Isadora's belief was based on the inspiration of the soul as partaking in the "complete manifestation of its divinity".

Her discoveries then, so new in the dance of her time, were similar to those in other contemporary arts trying to stride forward. Europe hailed Isadora; it hailed her honest and courageous attack on the dance of the time, and it was not interested in her technic; but only with the message she conveyed. Her art seemed to encompass man's existence from within, bringing to life an experience with new perspectives which she was inspired to release in dance.

TO BE CONCLUDED

the annual dance recital

(*continued from page* 28)

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TO BE CONCLUDED

In part II, the concluding chapter of this comprehensive and entertaining work by JOSEPHINE SCHWARZ, the author will discuss and offer practical suggestions on such diverse subjects as (1) the SAMPLE PROGRAM, (2) COSTUMING, (3) COSTUME CUTTING, (4) PRODUCTION, (5) NARRATION, (6) BACKSTAGE MANAGEMENT, (7) TIDBITS THAT MAY HELP, (8) SAMPLE LETTER and finally, epilogue.

Reviewer's Stand

(*continued from page* 10)

Valerie Bettis and **Merce Cunningham**, two of our generation's most individual talents, joined forces on May 14 at the 92nd Street "Y". They complemented each other so effectively that the concert was a conspicuous success.

Mr. Cunningham's creative bent is predominantly cerebral, and his dancing style is elusive and cool. Miss Bettis, on the other hand, is dramatic in approach, strong, direct, and electric in presence.

She was represented by a fresh and stunning performance of her long dance-drama, AS I LAY DYING, for which she was fortunate to have all but one member of the distinguished original cast. Mr. Cunningham opened the proceedings with five solos. One of these, ROOT OF AN

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UNFOCUS, dates from a rather early period in Mr. Cunningham's creative life, but it remains a particularly fine example of mood established by movement quality rather than by dramatic content.

Let us hope that Miss Bettis and Mr. Cunningham liked the idea of sharing a program as well as the audience did and that they will do so again. Composer-pianists John Cage and Bernardo Segall were at their usual posts.

★

The American Museum of Natural History closed its annual series on May 18 with a collaboration by **Myra Kinch, La Meri,** and their companies. Entitled **Trends in Ethnic and Modern Dance,** the program reflected intelligent planning.

La Meri was, of course, responsible for the ethnic portions. She has always liked to combine Eastern gesture and Western music. And so the program opened with a trio **Mari Lyn, Rebecca Harris,** and **di Falco,** tracing classic Hindu postures to the Adagio from the Bach Toccata in C Minor. Whether or not one enjoys this eclecticism is a matter of taste. We find it disturbing.

La Meri also served up a few hors d'oeuvres in the form of solo fragments from various ethnic styles, and she executed a rather leaden classic Spanish solo entitled Y SE NO HAY SUERTE.

Her group piece, YARAVI, was a simple story of frustrated love derived from an old Inca lament and performed in the shuffling, wooden idiom of the Otavalo Indians of Ecuador. While choreographically a bit repetitious, it captured the charm that derives from expressing serious human emotions in doll-like gesture.

Myra Kinch has a strange faculty for taking original ideas and clothing them in conventional vocabulary. She seems to prefer large, expansive gestures which easily become diffuse. This was particularly true of her solos, VARIATIONS ON THREE CLASSIC GESTURES and MODINHA (a Brazilian lament).

In her group work, QUE ME ENGANAS (Should you deceive me), lie the seeds of an interesting dance-drama. But Miss Kinch hasn't begun to explore the human implications of her material. The dance is laid in New Mexico circa 1800, a time when Spanish family ways were prevalent. It concerns a sister-dominated family in which the younger brother brings home an Indian wife, who is rejected by the sister, and the elder brother brings home an acceptable wife. The younger brother falls in love with the elder's wife, causing his own Indian wife to depart and the family to go on as before, minus the unacceptable member.

Although there were traces of the Spanish idiom with which the dance is supposedly flavored, Miss Kinch has not yet succeeded in penetrating the underlying traits that make Spanish people behave the way they do. And she has been careless in establishing dramatic motivation for her characters.

The same disparity between idea and execution was apparent in LOS ANGELES DE PUNO. And what a delightful idea it

was! La Meri and Miss Kinch, as the sculptured angels on the facade of the church at Puno, Bolivia, were called upon to arbitrate the petition of a girl and her two suitors. The angels went through a series of un-angelic pranks that will prove hilarious if their gestures can be more carefully stylized and the humor is prevented from becoming too broad.

Miss Kinch was attractively costumed by Bob Lee, and her talented husband, **Manuel Galea,** provided interesting and varied accompaniment.

★

The problem of style, which we discussed in connection with the Brooks-Munt works, is evidently a very real one for the inexperienced choreographer. It appeared in several guises on the **Theatre Dance** program of May 21 at the 92nd Street "Y".

In the case of **Alan Banks** it had to do with recognizing the quality of the music and capturing it in the choreography. His dance was for six girls accompanied by the Bach Italian Concerto in F. Although the opening of this music is dashing, even a bit imperious, there is nothing four-square about it. The fluidity of the polyphonic style is ever present, and there is a gloriously singing second movement. But the choreography with its full arm gestures slicing the air and its rather static leg extensions, rarely conveyed the music's tremendous emotional range and almost baroque elegance.

Ruth Currier, Joann Emmons, and **Lucy Venable** chose a handsome Hindemith Wind Quintet for their trio, DIVERTISSEMENT WITH EVIL. Although they were imaginative in relation to the music, their choreography was for the most part contrived. One received the impression of three very attractive little girls playing at being witches and failing to realize that evil, like any emotional or mental state, must derive from a true inner source.

Betty Lind's small group works, TOCCATA and OPUS THREE, were unaffected and sensitive to the requirements of the two interesting scores by Noel Sokoloff. In fact, it seemed as though choreography and music had been composed simultaneously.

TOCCATA was a silly little trio with lots of entrances and exits. It was brightly performed by **Ellen Albertini, Jeanna Belkin,** and **Jean Houloose.** Unfortunately, their long woolen underwear-like costumes detracted from the effect.

In OPUS THREE Miss Lind devised strong, meaty movement well suited to her four very presentable looking male dancers **(Bill Bradley, Jon Kovac, Rudy Tone,** and **William Weaver).** It was especially gratifying to see how easily Miss Lind avoided the jumping-and-leaping cliches usually reserved for men.

The program also included repeat performances of **La Meri's** YARAVI, **Nona Schurman's** SONGS FROM THE HEBRIDES, and **Virginia Johnson's** THE INVISIBLE WIFE. The small instrumental ensemble for the latter was conducted by Lionel Rudko, and Florence Weber, whose accompaniments are always a joy, took care

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of piano assignments for the Lind and Johnson compositions.

★

Unlike most organizations devoted to solidarity among nations, the **East and West Association** makes a consistent effort to promote the dance as a primary means of communication and understanding. Among their activities in this direction are a concert bureau and an annual concert at the 92nd Street "Y". This event, which took place on May 24, contained several wonderful surprises.

Although we've often seen shadow puppets hanging in shop windows, we've never seen an actual shadow play. And so we were entranced with the Chinese story of The Cowherd and the Weaving Maid as manipulated by the Red Gate Players.

The world of these dainty creatures is a small rectangular area much like that of our own puppet stages, but brightly lighted from behind so that all the scenery and characters take on a magical, translucent quality.

And the players, whose arms are operated by slender sticks, flip daintily from profile to profile (they're flat) or glide back and forth amidst the filigree scenery.

Sahomi Tachibana, a diminutive Japanese dancer, was also a pleasure. Not only is her pantomime of the utmost purity and exactitude, but she is a fine dancer from a purely athletic point of view. In her opening Dance of Purification she managed, despite her smallness, to encompass the stage with a catlike ballon.

While **Gina** was permitted only a single solo from her Hindu repertoire, **Josefina Garcia** and her group occupied far too much time with the Latin American Fiesta. Miss Garcia has a sound knowledge of her material, but she needs artistic direction. This would eliminate sloppy ensemble dancing and would help her to realize that certain types of ethnic material are suitable for teaching purposes but painfully uninteresting on stage. And social dances like the tango have little interest unless dressed up in the professional ballroom manner or unless they have a dramatic context as did the celebrated Rudolph Valentino tango from The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

Pearl Primus's running battle with malaria prevented her from dancing in the Dark Rhythms portion of the program, but her group acquitted itself with spirit. **Marjorie James** and **George Shipman**, who will presumably form a nucleus for Miss Primus's future company, are dancers whose obvious inexperience does not prevent them from making a definite impression. Mr. Shipman, in particular, has a vitality and intensity that will be stunning when brought into focus by more technical training. Alphonse Cimber, Moses Miann, and Helen Tinsley provided their usual percussion and vocal offerings.

★

One of the greatest pleasures for a critic is being able to chronicle development in an artist. **Pauline Koner's** April 29 Concert on the Needle Trades Series gave us that pleasure.

It is just about three years since Miss Koner last appeared at the Needle Trades. At that time she was giving solo concerts consisting of "cute" items in Broadway idiom and serious dances that were sincere but over-emotional. Her greatest assets were a strong, beautiful technique and smoothly professional programming.

Since 1947 Miss Koner has worked hard under the watchful eye of Doris Humphrey, and the result is a marked burgeoning in taste, sensitivity, and humility — all earmarks of the true artist.

The new concert, which included a small company and **Lucas Hoving** as guest artist, did not, of course represent perfection. But in any series of forward strides a few deviations are to be expected.

It's surprising that the opening CONCERTO IN D MAJOR (reviewed in detail when premiered last season by Theatre Dance) hasn't been snapped up by some ballet company. It's a lovely musical abstraction for five dancers **(Jean Haas, Virginia Bosler, Robert Herget, Robert Billheimer,** and **Miss Koner)** that digs deeply into the K.P.E. Bach score and emerges with a gracious warmth and intimacy. Accompanist Sarah Marks really had two hands full with Trude Rittman's monumental piano transcription of the orchestral score.

VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS was new to the New York audience. It is a difficult work — difficult to dance — difficult to like. Based upon the eternal verities of the Prophet Isaiah and with music from the Lukas Foss Cantata, "Song of Anguish," it is a danced solo interwoven with semi-dance movement for a baritone (Robert Walton). On a single viewing, the dance seemed over-choreographed and presented a disturbing differentiation of movement style between singer and dancer.

Miss Koner's JITTERBUG SKETCHES to a neat little score by Robert Russell Bennett, were old dances performed with new simplicity and restraint. They were followed by **Lucas Hoving's** meaty THREE CHARACTERS. It's amazing how these pleasingly adult personality sketches grow on one by virtue of their easy translation of dramatic detail into kinetic terms.

The shadow of Martha Graham's DEATHS AND ENTRANCES lay heavily on Miss Koner's personal characterization in her group work, THE VISIT. The dance focussed on a day in the life of a Victorian woman, who, as the program stated, "Fearing the violence of her emotions. . . . broke with her lover. He married her younger sister. A year has passed, and the couple arrive for their first visit."

And so they arrived, the gentle wife **(Betty Jones)** and the uneasy husband **(Lucas Hoving).** The woman **(Pauline Koner)** and her Inner Self **(Ruth Currier)** had a tortured time of it. (Actually, the woman's outward behavior was not sufficiently different from that of her Inner Self to justify the use of the extra dancer).

THE VISIT showed every evidence of care and thought. It was convincingly

danced, handsomely costumed by Christine Engler, and decorated by a clever trio of moveable archways by William Cecil. And Doris Humphrey was on hand with helpful artistic advice. But all these sure-fire ingredients could not replace the age-old principle of plot structure — that when people are brought together in crisis, some change or development must occur within them, and this change must be apparent to the audience. After all, the philosophers can't be wrong when they say that the very essence of life is change.

★

The auditorium of the American Museum of Natural History was jammed on May 4 for **Pearl Primus's** first local concert since her return from Africa. Although the program was by no means in the form it will assume when Miss Primus goes on tour next Fall, there was many indications of the deep artistic benefits of her trip, many signs of treats in store once her new material has been fully assimilated.

One of the loveliest moments was Miss Primus's appearance to say a few introductory words (since this was really a lecture demonstration). She was clad in a simple white garment that left both shoulders bare. Over one shoulder was thrown a richly patterned piece of handwoven native fabric fastened by a large silver circle. Her hair was brushed into a black halo decorated with small pieces of coral, and she held a blue-green feather fan.

As she spoke of the importance of dance to the African peoples and of how the heart of the dancer is at one with the heart of the earth, she set the stage eloquently and reverently for what was to come.

Usually lecture-demonstrations are rather pedantic. But Miss Primus's love for Africa is so deep that the eleven brief primitive patterns she explained and performed (or had her assistants perform) were more impressive in their sensitivity to the culture from which they spring than many of our own spectacular art dances. It will be interesting to see how Miss Primus develops these ceremonial motifs into theatre pieces.

The program also included an excerpt from a work-in-progress based upon James Weldom Johnson's GO DOWN DEATH (It is still too embryonic for critical comment) and familiar selections from the pre-Africa repertoire. Miss Primus was assisted by dancers **Marguerite James, Arleen Howell,** and **George Shipman;** drummers Moses Miann and Alphonse Cimber; and singer Helen Tinsley.

★

Mata and Hari must bring a big gust of salubrious air to any night club bill on which they appear. And they are ideal for Broadway and movie bits. But their April 16 program at the 92nd Street "Y" proved once again that their material wears thin when extended into a full length concert.

And it's not really their fault, any more than the same condition was Iva Kitchell's fault a few months ago. The pressing need for material to fill the program becomes

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the principal reason for doing new dances. As a result, rootless items like IN THE CIRCUS and MUSEUM OF MODERN ART edge their way into the picture and emphasize the disastrous effects of this false motivation.

The most successful Mata and Hari dances remain THE HINDU FAKIR SHOW, LOOKING FOR TALENT, "PAS DE DEUX," and CARNEGIE HALL, all of which, incidentally, have motivations integral to their themes.

Mata and Hari have developed an attractive little company consisting of **George Tomal, Tommy Marlowe,** and **Zoya Leporsky** (the latter being particularly appealing in LOOKING FOR TALENT), and their accompanist, Lothar Perl, would be the envy of any dancing organization.

★

Katherine Litz, who gave her first full length concert on April 23 at the 92nd Street "Y", previewed the program on April 22 for members of the press who were obliged to devote April 23 to the Ballet Theatre opening. It was a gracious gesture, but proved a drain on Miss Litz's energy.

The concert was sensitively conceived, with an attention to theatrical detail that Miss Litz has not heretofore shown. The costumes by Oriane Cottard and Charles Oscar were distinguished. We found Mr. Oscar's, with their clean outlines and emphasis on color, particularly suited to dance.

Despite several exquisite dancing moments, the concert brought to light questions that eternally plague artist and spectator. For example, at what point does personal style veer off into personal cliche? If a work is given a provocative title, should the content elucidate the title? How personal can one be and still communicate?

In the surge of creative and practical energy required to organize a concert with group, Miss Litz lost sight of these crucial questions. For it was her older works, the ones not created especially for this concert, that were clearer in content, richer in movement texture.

In her solo, ONE DEATH TO A CUSTOMER, Miss Litz resembled a fabulous Alice-in-Wonderland creature. But the dance was unintelligible and not very interesting. PASTORAL and BLOOD OF THE LAMB, while evocative, were too sparse in movement detail, and the group work, HAYSHAKERS, was distressingly trite.

One soon tired of the soft arms held high over the head or parallel in an offering gesture. And one tired of the curving feet that seemed to be tracing eternal circles in the sand. Miss Litz, like **Sybil Shearer,** has practiced diligently to make her hands and feet articulate. But this has led the concentration of focus on the extremeties, with an abandonment of the elevation and space manipulation integral to her earlier Humphrey-Weidman training. It remains for her to strike a mean between the two.

via the grapevine

(*Continued from page 8*)

"Anna and the King of Siam", producers, Rodgers and Hammerstein. . . **"The Barrier"** (an opera), choreographer, Charles Weidman, producer, Joel Spector. . . **"Out of this World"**, choreographer, Hanya Holm, producers, Arnold St. Subber and Lemuel Ayres.

Twenty musicals, with more or less dancing to boot; that's the agenda so far — and it's only July.

★

Wedding bells will din this month for **Beryl Grey** and **Sven Svenson** in London; for **Ina Kurland** and **Eddie Phillips** in New York.

★

That gay traveler, known to every dancing teacher in the 48 states, **Senya Solomonoff**, can be found during July selling ballerina gifts and dispensing some colourful remarks, as is his wont, in room 907 of the C.B.S. Building, Broadway and 53rd Street. Limited engagement only, so don't forget to meet him.

★

The **Ballet Soiree** of Washington, D. C., the nation's capital's own ballet company has suffered a change of name, and for the best, we think. The May 21st performance was its last under its old name. In the fall of 1950, upon the return of its bright star, **Venita Louise**, its guiding director, **Marion Venable** and other members of the company from study in Europe, it will re-emerge on a larger and more professional scale, to be known as the **National Ballet.**

★

The 2nd annual concert of the dance division of the New York City **High School of Performing Arts** held May 28th at the Hunter Playhouse forcibly impressed the conclusion on its audience that the high school, still in its infancy, already has the look of a great tradition about it. There may even come a time when dancers in great far-flung companies will greet each other with the monotonous remark, "You're from The high school? Me, too!" The baby crop is certainly arresting, and such dancers as **Rena Gluck, Lea Becker, Carol Barko,** and **Sheldon Ossovsky,** and such entertainers in the popular vein as **Nathan Alonzo, Henry Brunjes,** and **Charles Young** can hardly fail to make a dent in their environment in short order. In fact, if any thing is to be gleaned from this year's recital, it is the fact that the dancers are superior to the material in which they appear. Alas for the lack of the choreographer's master hand — maybe this is harder of achievement than the training of a dancer—no doubt.

★

The winning script in the contest held by the **Choreographers Workship** will be staged by the organization, with a suitable cast and an original score written for it. The competition, for a synopsis of a story to be expressed in dance, is still open to comers. Scripts should be submitted to the Choreographers Workshop, 471 Park Avenue, New York 22, N. Y., no later than September 15 . . . **Pola Nirenska,** who made an American debut on the Boston Dance Theatre series February 20th, will teach and stage productions for the Berkshire Playhouse Drama School at Stockbridge, this summer . . . **Tashamira** will appear July 18 on the Pennsylvania State College summer series in Jugoslavian and American genre dances . . . The June 11th concert of **Theatre Dance,** the last of the season, at the Studio Theatre offered a number of works by choreographers **Alan Banks, Glen Tetley, Aennchen, Florita Raup, Betty Lind, Harvey Krefets** and **Boris Runanine . . . Alix Taroff,** dancer-choreographer, appeared with members of her Israeli Dance Company in a suite of dances called "Israeli" at Madison Sq. Garden May 13th at a giant birthday party honoring the second anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel. Honorary chairman of the fete were Governor Dewey and Mayor O'Dwyer. V. P. Barkley and Senator Ives were principal speakers. The Taroff company includes such principals as **Kenneth Laurence** (formerly of Original Ballet Russe), **Don Farnworth, Ruth Spinner, Don Tutt, Charlotte Perlman, Sasha Menkin, Jane Alexander, Audrey Venter, Gloria Ria, Martin Waxman** and **James Sasso;** the last nine mentioned are all alumnae of the Chalif School. Miss Taroff has also appeared last month in a pageant "On the Wings of Eagles" presented June 4 at the Hotel Astor.

★

The **Tschaikovsky Foundation,** a music publishing house which recently issued a piano score of the four acts of SWAN LAKE, a really definitive and desirable possession for any choreographer or dance teacher, is currently getting ready for publication three other Tschaikovsky scores, annotated by Peter March, for piano; these are the NUTCRACKER, HAMLET and SLEEPING BEAUTY scores.

★

Betty Cashman, an actor's coach who is at least as well known to the profession, to dancers as well as actors, as the lights over Broadway, who has achieved no mean fame as the coach of coaches, has made her debut as an author in a field in which she is certainly qualified to be heard; the title is "YOU—in Personality, Acting and Public Speaking"—a fascinating collection of little handbooks written with utter lack of chi-chi and much practical knowledge. These handbooks are divided into eighteen diverse chapters with such titles as "Personality of YOU", "Color", "Speech and Voice", "Stage History", etc. Dancers, even those not concerned with voice training, will be greatly interested in this priming for the stage by one who should know. Among many dancers trained by Miss Cashman for pantomime and dramatic parts in musicals are **Bambi Linn, Joan McCracken, Tania Riabouchinska, Nelle Fisher, Paul Valentine (otherwise known as Valia Valentinoff), George Zoritch, Esther Junger, Katherine Lee, Patricia Bowman, Bill Callahan;** the list of names goes on and on—and fortunately, so does Miss Cashman. The book, published by the **Pama Press, at $7.50,** is any dancer's investment.

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Results of the annual competition held at the 92nd Street "Y" on June 5th are in. Winners are **Charlotte Griswold, Jack Moore, Carol Barko, Sheldon Ossosky, Pat Crowley, Marian Edelson.** Last four are alumnae of the High School of Performing Arts. These and others to be selected at another audition to be held at the "Y" late in September will appear in a formal concert debut some time during the 1950-51 season at the Dance Theatre of the YM-YWHA under the sponsorship of the Educational Department.

★

LONDON

There is much concern in London that **Martha Graham's** debut in England (at the Piccadilly Theatre, from July 17-August 15) will clash with the season of the New York City Ballet at Covent Garden. Two new companies with two new repertories appearing simultaneously are bound to split the potential audiences in two and neither group can be given the attention it deserves.

Nevertheless it is wonderful news that Graham is at last coming to England and this year's invasion by American dancers is everywhere welcomed as the best possible return for Sadler's Wells American tours.

The projected Ballet Theatre London season, after their appearances at the Edinburgh Festival, now seems likely to be at Covent Garden, some time in September after the one-week farewell season which Sadler's Wells will give before leaving for the United States.

Ashton's DANTE SONATA, a barefoot ballet to music of Lizst, inspired by the 1939 rape of Poland, was revived on June 20 and will be included in the American repertory. Fonteyn, Helpmann, May, Brae and Somes have the leading roles. It is possible, however, that Robert Helpmann's commitments in the TALES OF HOFFMANN film (being made by the RED SHOES team), may prevent him accompanying the ballet to America this year.

The centenary of **Enrico Cecchetti's** birth, on June 21st, was appropriately celebrated by the Cecchetti Society in London.

CAROUSEL, opened at the Drury Lane June 7th and settled in at once as another smash hit. **Bambi Lynn** and **Robert Pageant** shared the dance honours and the ballet by **Agnes de Mille** received much acclaim.

A brief season at the London Fortune Theatre by **Juana** aroused considerable interest, particularly in those dance circles here whose horizons extend beyond Sadler's Wells. Particularly attractive in Juana's repertory of dances of diverse peoples were her studies of women: the suite of dances "Women of India" and the full-length programme "Women in Various Cultures" were fascinating.

The **Tamiris** choreography for TOUCH AND GO (which won the DANCE Magazine award of the year for choreography in musical comedy in New York) is also proving the mainstay of the London production, for which it has been restaged by **Mary Anthony.** Particularly impressive was the dance drama UNDER THE SLEEPING VOLCANO, as danced by **Helen Gal-**

lagher, Mary Anthony, Jonathan Lucas and **David Lober;** this should help give London some notion of the potentialities of American modern dance.

The London dance world was unanimously delighted when **Frederick Ashton** received the C.B.E. (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) in the June, 1950, Birthday Honours—announced on the King's "official" birthday. Ashton receives the award as an artistic director and principal choreographer of the Sadler's Wells ballet. **Ninette de Valois** was decorated with the C.B.E. in January, 1947.

First repercussion of **Margot Fonteyn's** great triumph as guest artist in THE SLEEPING BEAUTY at La Scala, Milan, came when the administration of La Scala invited **Phyllis Bedells,** pioneer English dancer and teacher, to go to Italy as ballet mistress at La Scala.

Mary Clarke

★

PARIS

Les Ballets des Champs Elysees have ceased to exist under that title and will reorganize under the name "Associated Artists of the Dance", minus principal dancers **Jean Babilee, Natalie Phillipart** and **Irene Skorik. Boris Kochno** continues as the guiding hand in this company. He gave a brilliant cocktail party at the Restaurant Maxime recently for the newly reorganized group at which he announced that its new stars would be **Yvette Chauvire** and **V. Skouratoff.** The troupe makes its debut June 13-25 at the Theatre Champs Elysees, then leaves for a tour of Israel.

Tamara Toumanova's performance of GISELLE at the Opera was the most outstanding event in that company prior to its departure for annual vacation.

Ludmilla Tcherina has appeared in a spectacle at the Chaillot and seems to be in great dancing form.

Ballet Theatre's European appearances, viz. Edinburgh, Venice, London, Paris, etc., will be under the exclusive management of Anatole Heller of Paris.

The **Sakharoffs** gave their last European recital at the Salle Pleyel, accompanied by string quartette, rather an innovation for dance recitalists.

A. I. D.

★

Foreign companies here have met with varied receptions. **The Ballets Americain** met with a mixed reception. This was partly due to the fact that advance publicity (which was too little and too late) and the program carried no explanation of the fact that the **Ruth Page** ballets are burlesques. Ballets of the type of FRANKIE AND JOHNNY and BILLY SUNDAY are completely beyond the comprehension of Paris audiences. The latter, particularly, is simply a mystery to the French; this type of character simply does not exist in French culture. A parallel would be Americans with a high school French education trying to understand idiomatic French: clearly an impossible state of affairs. The **José Limon** ballets, on the other hand, such as THE MOOR'S PAVANNE, were not only understood, but received a warm and exuberant welcome.

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The **Ambassador Ballets,** an English troupe, appearing at the Theatre de L'Ambigu, was badly received, and it deserved to be, except for STAGIONE, in which poor costumes were replaced by sweaters and work clothes for an unpretentious but amusing ballet showing the dancers at rehearsal.

The **Rambert Ballet** had little advance publicity and did not get as large audiences as it deserved, due to the presence of so many competing companies in town. This was too bad as their work, though not elaborate, is very finished, and I passed one of the most enjoyable evenings of my ballet year at the Theatre Sarah Bernhardt where they appeared.

Moira Shearer has returned home and **Irene Skorik** is dancing the Carmen role in CARMEN with the Ballets de Paris of Roland Petit, and neither of these dancers are suited to the part, as **Renée Jeanmaire** ideally is.

The Opera Comique has staged a Ravel festival, with revivals of L'Enfant et les Sortileges", "L'Heure Espagnole" and "Valse" with dancers **Genevieve Kergrist, Paul Goube, Denise Duval** and **Jean Giradeau.**

Golda Antignac

★

CHICAGO

Operettas are bursting out all over, literally, for there will be two repertory companies working here "in the round" this summer. Music Theatre opened on June 25 with NAUGHTY MARIETTA in which **Jane Bockman** and **Bud Tygett** dance leads.

The Trade Fair to be held on the lake shore features a Music-in-the-Round tent which will have 50 minute versions of well known musicals given four times a day. First week's fare is THE MIKADO and OF THEE I SING, to be followed by MERRY WIDOW and ON THE TOWN. Most of the dancers for this enterprise were recruited from MISS LIBERTY, which closed quietly after a very quiet two weeks.

For sheer pulsing, seething rhythm, the program of African and Cuban dances given by the **Jimmy Payne** group at the 8th St. Theatre, would be hard to beat. There is unpretentiousness and sincerity which makes their work touching. Lanky teen-ager **Sylvia Lyda** was a stand-out in "Children at Play".

Anne Rudolph's solo concert, her first in four years, harked back technically to central Europe of the '30's. Miss Rudolph is most effective in creating a picture that establishes a mood. She does not go far beyond that, but her very friendly audience was satisfied.

Beldon Wood Starr, who has been very active all year, gave his final program of the season with his group known as the Chicago Dance Theatre. Mr. Starr is something of an Orson Welles of the dance, for not only is he first dancer of the company and choreographer of all the ballets, but he also composed some of the music and wrote accompanying word scripts and designed their costumes. Most interesting work was YELLOW DUST, a "saga of the Oklahoma dust bowl" with a special score by Neal Kagan. Especially good performances were turned in by dancers **Madge Friedman** and **Carolyn Blair.**

Margot Koche was dance director for FUN BEGINS AT FIFTY, the annual South Shore Follies. Modern dancer **Patty Hughes** was featured performer.

Walter Camryn presented his group in Rockford, Ill., on May 20 in two performances including FERDINAND THE BULL, a fantasy ballet danced to the CARMEN score.

The **Chicago Dance Council** elected the following officers for next season, which is to be its 15th year and promises to be a gala one: chairman, **Grace Peterson,** vice-chairman, **Francis Allis,** corresponding secretary, **Ella Mae Frese,** recording secretary, **Nell Boand,** treasurer, **Lottie Pattarini,** board of directors: **Dorothy Kozeluh, Augusta Swawite, Patricia Pugh, Theodora Burch, Katharine Manning, Minnie Cohen, Maude Haase, Betty Byrne, Helen Pomerantz,** and **Ann Barzel.**

The most terrific dance shown in many a moon is the CROSS COUNTRY REVUE in the Palmer House's Empire Room. Dreamed up by **Max Liebman** of Tamiment and TV fame, it is mostly dancing and has **Nelle Fisher** as choreographer and dancers **Jerry Ross, Bob Hamilton, Gloria Stevens, Pat Horn, Frances Rainer** and **Christine Karner** . . . . Costuming and presentation were up to the meticulous **Merriel Abbot** standard, for it was she who brought the show to the hotel room.

During the eight weeks of the Liebman occupancy of the Empire Room, the Merriel Abbot dancers will tour Italy, making appearances in Rome, Naples, Milan and Turin. **Edith Barstow** is captain of the troupe.

Ann Barzel

★

SAN FRANCISCO

Dance lovers here turned up in top hat and tails for two gala events last month: **Russell Hartley's** reception on the opening of his exhibit at the Labaudt Galleries, and the premiere of **Mata** and **Hari** and their company at the Peacock Court of the Mark Hopkins. All I can say of the latter is that they convulsed San Francisco. They are here for three weeks before going to L. A. for TV appearances.

Ann Halprin and **Welland Lathrop** gave a concert at Wheeler Hall, Berkeley, as part of the University of California's regular dance series. They have also recently conducted an important dance symposium at the U. of California, with a master class of two hundred students drawn from the entire west coastal area. Their students were divided into four groups, each group given a dance project to work out, to be performed and criticized for structure, style and content.

Pacific Dance Theatre's afternoon at the Palace of the Legion of Honour offered a program combined of folk dances and divertissements from COPPELIA. Other numbers were by **Merriam Lanova, Ann Halprin,** and **Welland Lathrop.**

Beatrice de Baltazar

★

news of teachers schools associations

The **Texas Association of Teachers of Dancing** held its second annual normal school at the Baker Hotel, Dallas, Texas June 26-30 wth a faculty composed of **Adolf Bolm, Miriam Widman, Ruth Barnes,** and **Jack Dayton.**

Among conventions of the year not previously announced is that of the **Dance Teachers Club of Boston,** which is to hold its annual convention August 28-September 1 at the Parker House in Boston. The faculty is to include **Bentley Stone, Byrnes & Swanson, Ruth I. Byrne, Walter Camryn, Don Begenau, Harriet James, Jack Stanly, Hazel Boone, Kathryn Pope** and others.

Among camps not previously announced is that of the **Evans Studio** which will hold camp on the York River, Hampton, Va.

The D. E. A. convention in New York this month will certainly be star-studded with names; such celebrities as **Agnes de Mille, Nana Gollner, Beatrice Kraft,** and **Bill Callahan** are promised in addition to an impressive faculty to consist of **Muriel Stuart, Paul Petroff** and **Oreste Sergievsky** (in ballet), **Roye Dodge, Buster Cooper, Henry LeTang, Eddie Roberts** (in tap), **Elinor Fry** (baby dances), **Jack King** (baton), **Rose Lorenz** (children's productions), **Joe Price** (acrobatics), **Nona Shurman** (modern) and ballroom dances by **Byrnes & Swanson, Ruth I. Byrne, Mr. and Mrs. John Phillips, Carlton & Adele Richardson, Lilafrances Viles.**

The **Dancers International** has added the name of **Elizo Herrera,** the authority on Mexican and Spanish dance, to its "Holiday in Hollywood" faculty.

★

In the NEW YORK SCHOOLS

A number of New York schools have announced guest teachers on their summer faculties, as follows:

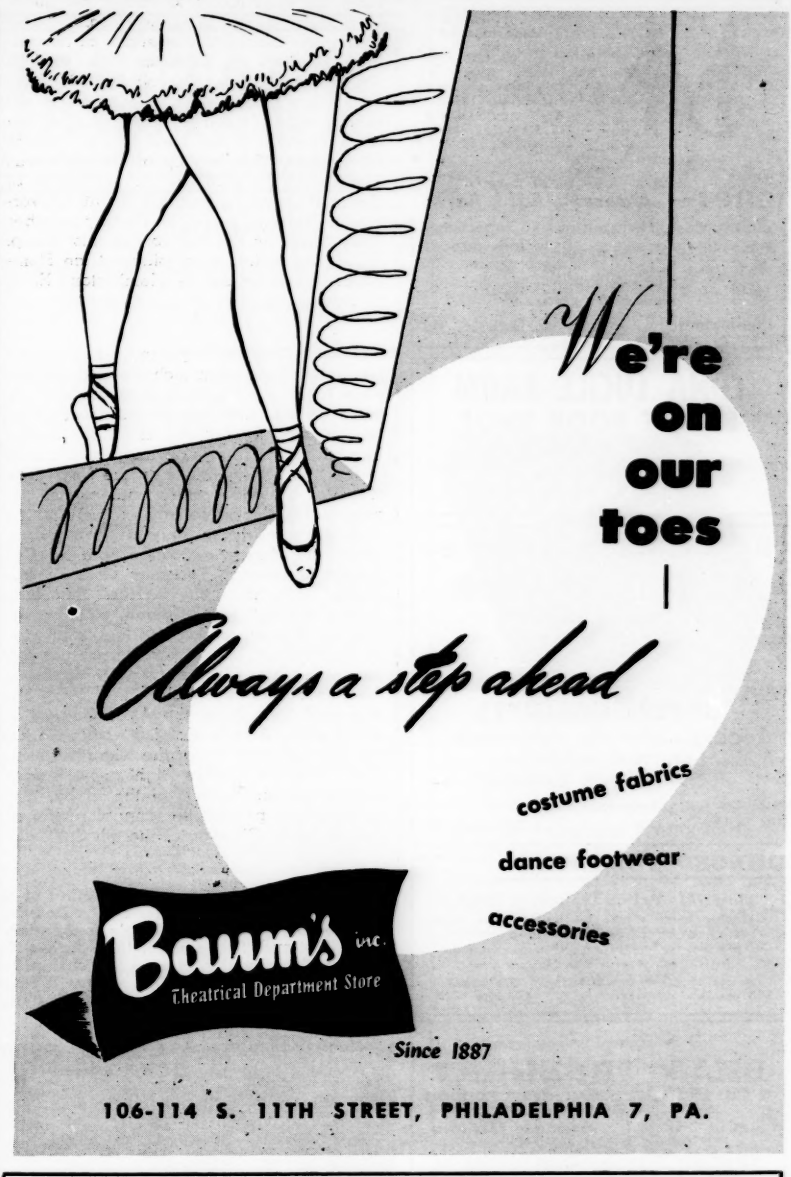
At the **Ballet Arts** School, **Frederic Franklin** will teach from mid-July through the end of August; **Antony Tudor, Edward Caton** and **Paul Petroff** will teach through July; **Vera Nemtchinova** will teach in July and August; **Nina Strogonova** and **Vladimir Dokoudowsky,** soon to return from a European concert tour, will teach here immediately upon return, and **Yeichi Nimura** will give a special class featuring some of his original dance compositions.

Sergei Ismailoff will guest teach at both **School of Dance Arts** and the **George Chaffee** school.

Mia Slavenska and **Ruthanna Boris** will be guest teachers on the faculty of the **Fokine School,** which also announces a course in music for dancers to be given by **John Colman.**

★

An undergraduate of **New Jersey College for Women,** Rutgers University, will



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have the opportunity to further her study of modern dance in a New York school next year, thanks to the efforts of her fellow members of **Orchesis**, the modern dance group here. The scholarship fund came from the proceeds of the annual Spring recital given by the group at the Little Theatre of the New Jersey College for Women. This branch of Orchesis was established in 1936, as an outgrowth of National Orchesis, founded at the University of Wisconsin in 1920. Faculty member **Tillie Wityk** is in direction of this group. Their next recital takes place at the Flemington High School in Flemington, N. J., in November.

★

Nenette Charisse is planning to package her ballet instruction technics and experience in an album of records for use by dance teachers. If this project is successful, she will record the same in foreign languages for European markets. . . One of the first performances on the New York stage of a dance group with choral accompaniment to issue from a local school took place early in May at Town Hall, when the dance education unit of **Columbia University, Teachers College**, appeared with full orchestra and chorus in annual concert. **Jean Erdman**, well known modern dancer, and part time instructor at the College, was choreographer of the dances. . . The 61st anniversary dance of the **Oscar Duryea** school of New York City was held June 30 at the Astor Gallery of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Another dance will be held July 7th at the Alden Hotel... World traveler **Gladys Hight** is back from another six-month tour of the globe, just in time to supervise the annual recital of her school in Chicago at the 8th St. Theatre. Miss Hight is one of the few white people ever to have penetrated Tibet, and furthermore, was present on the memorable occasion of the cremation of the King of Siam. In spite of all adventures, she says home (Chicago) is far from dull. . . **Miriam Marmein** will appear as choreographer for the New Jersey Civic Ballet again next season, this year's having proven so conclusively popular and successful. She will appear this summer as soloist and choreographer for the ballet in the New Wickham Opera, in Plymouth, Mass., as well as conducting her own school and theatre at Manomet, Mass.

★

1st Seasonal Report: C.D.T.A.

The first season of the newly organized **Canadian Dance Teachers Association** has emphasized a great many of the points projected by the group in its effort to raise the standard of dance teaching in Canada. Technical committees have been elected to govern ballet, tap, acrobatic and ballroom dance, which seek to establish basic principles for the teaching of these subjects, and results will be made available to all members of the C.D.T.A. next season. In its recent meetings, in addition to actual classwork, the association has given dance film showings, has had guest speakers and demonstrations on mime in relation to dance. Canadian teachers who have attended these meetings have had the opportunity to study with such authorities in their fields as **Harold Turner, Mary Skeaping, Louise Burns, Betty Oliphant, Walter Balay, Paul Szilard, Jack Lemen, Don Le Blanc, Ruth French, Cecil DaCosta, Anna Verity, Katharine Forbes** and **Louise Goldsmith.**

★

Group taken at last monthly meeting of the Associated Dancing Teachers of Southern California: seated at table, l to r. Dorothy Lee Tifal, president of the association and director of the Ruth St. Denis foundation, Devi Dja, and Kay Herbert, guest teacher from Scotland. Standing, l. to r. Agnes Ward, Trinidad Goni, Ernest E. Ryan, Gladys Bowen, Tom Sheehy, Margie Rix, Arthur Price and Nancy Jackson. The party was given in honour of Miss Devi Dja, who will appear on the faculty of the annual convention of this group in Hollywood, July 9-13, before departing for her native country.

photo: Izmirlian

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